



**DELHI UNIVERSITY
LIBRARY**

DELHI UNIVERSITY LIBRARY

Cl No. 05961:2M62:1

111F4

Ac No 123770

Date of release for loan

36.

This book should be returned on or before the date last stamped below

An overdue charge of Six nP will be charged for each day the book is kept overtime

**THE DEATH OF TINTAGILES
AND OTHER PLAYS**

BY

MAURICE MAETERLINCK

THE
POCKET EDITION OF WORKS
BY
MAURICE MAETERLINCK

Foolscap 8vo, Designed Covers

Cloth	3s 6d	}	Net per Vol
Leather	6s 0d		

THE LIFE OF THE BFE	81st Thousand\	
THE TREASURE OF THE		
HUMBLE	43rd	
WISDOM AND DESTINY	40th	} <i>Essays</i>
THE BURIED TEMPLE	19th	
THE DOUBLE GARDEN	15th	
LIFE AND FLOWERS	14th	
AGLAVAINÉ AND SELV- SETTE	7th	
MONNA VANNA.	10th	
BEATRICE AND ARDIANE	5th	
JOYZELLE	5th	} <i>Plays</i>
PELLEAS AND MELISANDA		
AND THE SIGHTLESS	23rd	
THE DEATH OF TINTAGILES, AND OTHER PLAYS		

THE DEATH OF TINTAGILES AND OTHER PLAYS

BY

MAURICE MAETERLINCK



LONDON DUCKWORTH & CO
3 HENRIETTA STREET, W C 2 AND
GEORGE ALLEN & UNWIN LTD
RUSKIN HOUSE, 40 MUSEUM STREET, W C 1

*The contents of this volume are published by permission of
Messrs Duckworth & Co by whom they are also published in
a volume entitled "Three Little Dramas" by Maurice Maeterlinck*

All Rights Reserved

First Published 1899

Reprinted 1915

" 1921

Pocket Edition 1924

*Reprinted in Saxony by the Kodak Process from a copy
Printed in Great Britain by Lippincott & Spence, Edinburgh*

INTRODUCTION

THESE three little plays were written after *Pelleas and Melisande*, before "*The Treasure of the Humble*," before "*Aglavaine and Selysette*" They were the last of the series that began with "*The Princess Maleine*" a series of what might almost be termed *Dramas of Unconsciousness and Instinct* A curious fatalism runs through them all, we feel that the men and women before us are merely unravelling the web that Destiny has spun round their lives—Destiny being a mysterious and inexorable force whose behests they must blindly obey They are the slaves of their passions, slaves of the events that befall them, they are primitive beings, the mainspring of whose action lies for ever exposed on the surface, they are creatures in whom deed follows instinctively on thought—and yet are we curiously conscious the while of the struggle in their soul, of their vague and helpless desire, as fate hurries them swiftly along to their doom In his later work, M Maeterlinck has entered fields of speculation that are wider, surer, nearer to life, here he seems still to be groping, searching, eagerly trying to discover the relationship that exists between man and his destiny, between man and the universe These plays are often termed "mystic", it were more correct, perhaps, to describe them as plays that are governed by obscure ideas, ideas that have not yet become clear, and, considering them thus, we shall

INTRODUCTION

find in them the germ of many a lofty, magnificent thought of "Wisdom and Destiny", we shall understand the process of reasoning by which Fate, that in "Alladine and Palomides" is a monstrous force, crushing all life and all hope, shall in a few years be looked on as a power that can never enter the soul, uncalled, that can vanquish the upright man only by the good it compels him to do, and that has but one sword wherewith to attack him, the sword of goodness and truth

"Three little dramas for marionettes," they are called, nor is this a mere fanciful description of their nature, or affectation on the part of the author. He does but thereby give expression to his feeling that the naïvete of treatment, the simplicity of character, render them somewhat ill-adapted for performance on the regular stage. And indeed few concessions are made to the realism demanded by modern convention. We know nothing of his people, who they are, or whence they come. This man is a king, that other a prince's son, the third a retainer. Often, indeed, they will be nameless—merely strangers, old men, sisters. They live, always, in palaces with gloomy corridors, and lofty, ruined towers, there are underground rivers, savage mountains, ominous forests, and the unquiet, restless sea is never far away. When the curtain rises, the characters are "discovered," and begun to speak, having said their say, they go out "by different ways," and the curtain abruptly falls. The environment is unchanging, but it is because the poet wills it so, because he chooses the scene that appears to him best fitted to his subject, and persists in regarding the setting as a matter entirely subordinate. His methods, therefore, are by no means in harmony

INTRODUCTION

with those of the modern stage, and yet such pieces of his as have been performed—notably “*Pelleas and Melisande*,”—conclusively prove that these methods do not detract from the complete enjoyment of the audience. For M. Maeterlinck is a dramatist of rare quality, and plays, after all, are meant to be acted.

“*Alladine and Palomides*” has much in common with the play mentioned above, which was its immediate predecessor, though it perhaps fails to reach the very high level of that most exquisite tragedy. But yet it would seem in some measure to mark a fuller creativeness, a somewhat wider conception. *Alladine* is as naïve as *Melisande*, as unconscious, and yet more alert, more alive, endowed with more will and initiative, more foresight, more knowledge. *Melisande* shrinks from death, is scarcely aware of what death may mean, *Alladine* prefers love to life, and through all her childishness and want of reason we detect an ardent, urgent soul. And in this play, too, there is *Astolaine*—no less instinctive than the others—but whose instincts all make for nobility, sacrifice, devotion, whose love is so great that she can almost cheerfully resign the man she adores to a rival, and for this rival have only love too, and sisterly sympathy. *Astolaine*—to use a phrase of which M. Maeterlinck is fond—has attained the higher unconsciousness, that has drawn near unto God. She moves in the midst of these impetuous, impulsive creatures like one inspired, a centre of light, and we feel that her love, that is so hushed and silent, is yet infinitely greater and deeper than the more turbulent, overwhelming passion of *Alladine*. The old King who has grown weary of the monotony of his existence, and climbs on to the battlements to summon

INTRODUCTION

the events that are to rob him of reason and life, embodies an idea that will be familiar to the readers of M Maeterlinck's essays. He was not able to understand the happiness that dwelt in the very uniformity of his existence, he clamoured for adventure, but, when it came, he lacked the power to transform it into consciousness, he allowed it to assume complete mastery over him and promptly yielded himself over to calamity. In marked contrast to Ablamore is the sage in "Intérieur", the wise, benevolent old man, who places the centre of his joys in those about him, and finds happiness in watching their simple gestures, their calm and placid lives. "Intérieur" is a triumph of technical skill, as we read, we are painfully conscious of that peaceful family in their room, behind the lighted windows, seated there in all tranquillity, suspecting nothing, we dread the terrible awakening, and in our hearts are grateful to Mary for her suggestion that the sorrowful tale be not told until the morrow, and when at length the old man enters and the father rises to greet him, we almost turn our eyes away from the poignant misery that we know must ensue. And yet all is suggested only, there is not a word of despair. But this beautiful little play does more than merely stir our emotions, there is not a word that falls from the old man's lips but is noble, touching, throbbing with love, deeply and humanly sensitive, he is wise with a wisdom that disdains nothing, but has ever kept in close kinship with man. "The Death of Tintagles"—the play M Maeterlinck himself prefers of all he has written—is a strangely powerful study of sisterly love. Ygraine's devotion to little Tintagles is all-absorbing, overwhelming, Ygraine herself, in her despair, her pathetic entreaty,

INTRODUCTION

her desperate struggle, is surely one of the most piteous victims of the cruelty of Fate. We have here the story of a child whom death tears away from his sister's helpless embrace, the play itself being symbolic of the struggle of all mankind against Death.

I have said that this play is symbolic, yet are those doubtless mistaken who imagine that there is scarcely a line in M. Maeterlinck's writings but has its special cryptic meaning. Symbolism there certainly is, but it is broad and general, one central idea, or set of ideas, will govern the whole, the plays however are invariably simple and direct, and by no means underlined with constant symbolic reference. The air, it may be, is charged with mystery, but only such as pertains to the shadowy twilight in which the characters move, and have being. Let us take, as an instance, the scene in "Alladine and Palomides," where the two lovers are imprisoned in the grotto, they tear the bandages off their eyes, and the light thrown up by the blue water that flows at their feet reveals to them countless sparkling jewels and radiant flowers on the walls of the cavern, yet it needs but one ray of the sun, as it pierces through the cleft in the rock, to prove that what seemed flashing gem is nothing but dull and lifeless stone, what seemed exquisite roses only moist and decaying fungus. Here we may find perhaps some connection with the thought M. Maeterlinck has since expressed in his essays, viz., that the beautiful dream which shrinks from reality, actuality, and cannot support the steady light of everyday life, is in itself a tawdry thing too, and unreal, and not what it seems. But those unable to define this wider and more general meaning will still

INTRODUCTION

understand the scene in the grotto as fully and completely as the others, they will understand as Alladine and Palomides understood. There are many, too, who will ponder over the symbolic meaning of Alladine's pet lamb, that fled from her and was found dead where she herself met her death, many will be eager to know who the mysterious queen may be, who so ruthlessly persecutes Tintagiles, yet will those, perhaps, appreciate these little plays the most who will be content to take them as they are, demanding no definition, seeking for no hidden meaning, who will be satisfied to accept what the author gives them, and try to fathom only the spirit that underlies his work. For we have here little dramas of life, viewed through a darkened mirror, life shorn of its complexity, reduced to its primal simplicity. They are studies in monochrome, wherein many of the subtler half-tones do yet find expression, they are things of delicate and tender beauty—whereof much, alas, must inevitably be lost in process of translation, and finally they are the creation of a lofty and penetrating mind, that handles all things with reverence and invests them with dignity, a mind that in all existing things sees matter for admiration and wonder.

ALFRED SUTRO

THE translations of *Interior* and *The Death of Tintagiles*, revised for this series by Messrs WILLIAM ARCHER and ALFRED SUTRO respectively, have been reprinted with the kind permission of Mr ARCHIBALD GROVE, Mr HEINEMANN and Messrs HENRY & Co.

ALLADINE AND PALOMIDES

TRANSLATED BY ALFRED SUTRO

CHARACTERS

ABLAMORE

ASTOLAINÉ, *Ablamore's daughter.*

ALLADINE

PALOMIDES.

THE SISTERS OF PALOMIDES.

A DOCTOR

ACT I

SCENE

A wild spot in the gardens

ALLADINE lies asleep , ABLAMORE is bending over her

ABLAMORE

Sleep seems to reign here, day and night, beneath these trees No sooner have we arrived, she and I, towards eventide, no sooner has she seated herself, than sleep steals over her Alas, I ought to be glad of it ! For in the daytime, if I speak to her and our eyes chance to meet, there comes into her eyes a look so hard that she might be a slave whom I had ordered to do a thing that could not be done But that look is not usual with her Often and often have I watched those beautiful eyes as they rested on children, the forest, the sea, or whatever was near At me she smiles as we smile at our enemies , and never dare I bend over her save when her eyes can no longer behold me A few such moments are mine every evening , the rest of the day I live by her side with my face averted It is sad to love too late Women do not understand that years cannot separate heart from heart " The wise King " they used to call me I was wise because, till then, nothing had happened There are some men from

ALLADINE AND

ACT I

whom events do thus seem to shrink, and turn aside
 Nothing would ever take place where I chanced to
 be I had some suspicion of this in bygone
 days There were friends of mine, in my youth, who
 had only to show themselves for adventures to flock
 to them, but if I sallied forth in their midst, seeking
 gladness or sorrow, we would ever return empty
 handed It is as though I had paralysed
 destiny, and there was a time when this was a
 source of much pride to me During my reign,
 all men have known peace But now I have
 come to believe that even disaster is better than
 lethargy, and that there must be a life that is loftier,
 more stirring, than this constant lying in wait
 They shall see that I too, when I choose, have the
 power to stir up the dead water that slumbers in the
 mighty tarn of the future Alladine, Alladine!

Oh how beautiful she is! Her long hair falls
 on to the flowers, on to her lamb, her mouth is half
 open, and fresher than the dawn I will kiss
 her—she shall not know I will keep back this
 poor white beard of mine (*he kisses her*)—She
 smiled Why should I be sorry for her? She
 gives me a few years of her life, but some day she
 will reign as queen, and before I wend my way
 hence, I shall at least have done a little good
 They will be surprised She herself knows
 nothing Ah see, she awakes, in alarm Where
 do you come from, Alladine?

ALLADINE

I have had a bad dream

ABLAMORE

What is it ? Why look you out yonder ?

ALLADINE

Someone has passed by, on the road.

ABLAMORE

I heard nothing

ALLADINE

I tell you someone is coming There he is ! *(She points to a young cavalier who is advancing towards them through the trees holding his horse by the bridle)*
Do not hold my hand, I am not frightened
He has not seen us

ABLAMORE

Who would dare to come here ? If I were not
sure I believe it is Palomides He is be-
trothed to Astolaine See, he raises his head
Is it you, Palomides ?

Enter PALOMIDES

PALOMIDES

Yes, my father if I may already call you by that
name I have come before the day and before the
hour

ABLAMORE

You are welcome, whatever the hour But what
can have happened ? We did not expect you so
soon, not for at least two days Has Astolaine
come with you ?

ALLADINE AND

ACT I.

PALOMIDES

No, she will arrive to-morrow We have travelled day
and night She was tired, she begged me to go on
before her Are my sisters here?

ABLAMORE

They came three days ago, and wait for the wedding
You look very happy, Palomides

PALOMIDES

Who would not be happy, that had found all he sought?
There was a time when sorrow weighed on me But
now the days seem lighter to me, and more gentle,
than the innocent birds that come and nestle in our
hand And if by chance one of the old moments
returns to me, I have but to draw nigh unto Astolaine,
and a window would seem to fly open and let in the
dawn Astolaine's soul can be seen, it is there, it
takes you in its arms and comforts you, without say-
ing a word, as one comforts a suffering child I
shall never understand I know not whence it
arises, but my knees bend under me if I only speak
of her

ALLADINE

I want to go in

ABLAMORE (*noticing that Alladine and Palomides are
looking shyly at each other*)

This is little Alladine, who has come from the depths
of Arcady Take each other by the hand
You are surprised, Palomides?

ACT I.

PALOMIDES

PALOMIDES

My father

*[His horse makes a brusque movement which startles
Alladine's lamb]*

ABLAMORE

Be careful, your horse has frightened Alladine's lamb
It will run away

ALLADINE

No, it never runs away It was surprised, that is all
It is a lamb that my godmother gave me It is not
like other lambs It never leaves me, day or night
[She caresses the lamb]

PALOMIDES *(also caressing it)*.

It is looking at me with the eyes of a child.

ALLADINE

It understands everything

ABLAMORE

It is time for you to go to your sisters, Palomides They
will be surprised to see you

ALLADINE

They have gone to the cross-roads every day I went
with them, but they did not expect so soon

ABLAMORE

Come, Palomides is covered with dust and must be tired
We have too much to tell one another, we must not
stay here To-morrow we will talk The dawn, they

ALLADINE AND

ACT I

say, is wiser than evening See, the palace gates
are open and seem to invite us

ALLADINE

I cannot tell why it is that uneasiness comes to me, each
time I go into the palace It is so vast and I am so
little, I am lost in it And all those windows
that look on to the sea You cannot count
them And the corridors that wind, and wind,
for no reason, and others that do not turn, but that
lose themselves in the walls And the rooms
I dare not go into—

PALOMIDES

We will go into every one

ALLADINE

I feel that I was not meant to live there, or that it was
not built for me Once, I lost my way I
had to open thirty doors before the daylight returned
to me And I could not escape, the last door led
to a lake And there are vaults that are cold even
in summer, and galleries that twist, and twist, back
on to themselves And stairs that lead no whither
and terraces whence nothing can be seen.

ABLAMORE

How you speak to-night, you who are always so silent
[They go out]

ACT II

SCENE I

ALLADINE is discovered, her forehead pressed against one of the windows looking on to the park Enter ABLAMORE

ABLAMORE

Alladine

ALLADINE (*turning round quickly*).

Yes

ABLAMORE

Oh how pale you look ! Are you ill ?

ALLADINE

No

ABLAMORE

What were you looking at in the park ? At the row of fountains in front of the windows ? They are marvellous, indefatigable They sprang up, one after the other, at the death of each of my daughters At night I can hear them singing in the garden They recall to me the lives they stand for, and I am able to distinguish their voices

ALLADINE

I know

ABLAMORE

You must forgive me , I repeat myself at times , my memory is not quite so faithful It is not because of my age , I am not an old man yet, thank

ALLADINE AND ACT II SC. I

God, but a King has a thousand cares Palomides
has been telling me of his adventures .

ALLADINE

Ah !

ABLAMORE

He has not acted in all things as he would have desired
to act Young men are not very strong-willed,
nowadays—I was surprised There were countless
sutors for my daughter's hand, I had chosen him
from among them all She needed a soul that
should be no less profound than her own Nothing
that he has done could be called inexcusable, but
yet I had hoped for more What impression did
he make on you ?

ALLADINE

Who ?

ABLAMORE

Palomides

ALLADINE

I have only seen him that one evening . .

ABLAMORE

I was astonished —Hitherto all has gone well with him
He undertook nothing that he did not accomplish
successfully, and without many words He always
could overcome danger, with scarcely an effort,
while so many others can hardly open a door without
finding death crouching behind He was of those
upon whom events seem to wait, on their knees
But of late it appears as though something were

broken, as though his star were no longer the same, as though every step that he took dragged him further away from himself—I know not what it can be—He himself seems not to suspect it, but to everyone else it is clear. But enough of all this, see, the night is coming towards us, creeping over the walls. Shall we go together to the wood of Astolat, where we always spend our evenings?

ALLADINE

I shall not go out to-night

ABLAMORE

We will stay here then, since you prefer it. But the air is tender to-night, the evening is beautiful (*Alladine trembles, unperceived by him*) I have had flowers planted along the hedges, I should have liked to have shown them to you

ALLADINE

No, not to-night. I beg of you. I like going there with you. the air is very pure, and the trees but not to-night (*she bursts into tears, and nestles close to the old man's breast*) I am not well

ABLAMORE

Not well? You are falling. I will call . .

ALLADINE

No, no . . . it is nothing. it is over now . .

ALLADINE AND ACT II SC II

ABLAMORE

Sit down Wait

[He goes quickly to the door at the back, and throws it wide open Palomides is behind, seated on a bench that faces the door he has not had time to turn his eyes away Ablamore looks fixedly at him, but says not a word, then returns to the room Palomides rises, and steals away through the corridor, on tiptoe The lamb goes out of the room, unperceived by the others]

SCENE II

A drawbridge over the palace moat Palomides enters at one end, Alladine at the other, with her lamb by her side King Ablamore is leaning out of a window in the tower

PALOMIDES

You are going out, Alladine ?—I have just returned , I have been hunting There has been a shower

ALLADINE

I have never yet crossed this bridge

PALOMIDES

It leads to the forest People seldom pass over it They prefer to take another road, which is much longer I imagine that they are afraid, because the dykes here are deeper than elsewhere , and the black water that pours from the mountain seethes horribly between the walls before it throws itself into the sea It is always angry, but the quays are so high that one

scarcely can see it This is the most deserted wing
of the palace But the forest is more beautiful this
side—older and grander than anything you ever have
seen, full of strange trees and flowers that have sprung
up of themselves Will you come ?

ALLADINE

I don't know I am afraid of the angry water

PALOMIDES

Come—there is no cause for its anger See, your lamb is
looking at me as though it desired to go Come. .

ALLADINE

Do not call, it will break away from me .

PALOMIDES

Come with me Come

*[The lamb escapes from Alladine and bounds towards
Palomides but it stumbles on the slope of the
drawbridge, misses its footing and falls into the
moat]*

ALLADINE

Where is it ? What has happened ?

PALOMIDES

It has fallen into the moat ! It is struggling in the
whirlpool Do not look , nothing can be done. . .

ALLADINE

You will save it ?

ALLADINE AND ACT II SC III

PALOMIDES

Save it ! Alas, it is already drawn under Yet an instant
and it will be below, underneath the vaults , and God
Himself will never behold it again .

ALLADINE

Leave me ! leave me !

PALOMIDES

What have I done ?

ALLADINE

Leave me ! I never want to see you again .

*[Ablamore enters abruptly, seizes Alladine and takes
her away quickly, without saying a word]*

SCENE III

A room in the palace

ABLAMORE and ALLADINE are discovered together

ABLAMORE

See, Alladine, my hands are not trembling, and my heart
beats as tranquilly as that of a sleeping child, and
indeed my voice has never been raised in anger I
do not blame Palomides, though his conduct may well
seem unpardonable And as for you, why should I
blame you ? You obey laws that you know not of ,
nor could you have acted otherwise I shall say not
a word of all that took place, but a few days ago, by
the side of the castle moat, or of what the sudden
death of the lamb might have revealed to me, had I

ACT II SC III PALOMIDES

chosen to believe in omens But last night I witnessed
the kiss you exchanged beneath the windows of
Astolaine's room At that moment I happened to
be with her The one great dread of her soul is lest
she disturb the happiness of those about her by a tear,
or even a quiver of the eyelid , and thus I never shall
know whether she also beheld that miserable kiss
But I do know how deeply she can suffer I shall
ask nothing of you that you cannot confess to me ,
all I wish you to tell me is whether you obeyed some
secret plan when you followed Palomides underneath
the window where you must have seen us Answer
me fearlessly , you know I have already forgiven

ALLADINE

I did not kiss him

ABLAMORE

What ! you did not kiss Palomides, or he you ?

ALLADINE

No.

ABLAMORE

Ah ! Listen I came hither prepared to forgive all
that had happened I said to myself that you
had acted as most of us act when our soul holds
aloof from us But now all must be told You
love Palomides you kissed him before my eyes

ALLADINE.

No

ABLAMORE

Do not run away I am only an old man. Do no try
to escape

ALLADINE AND ACT II SC III

ALLADINE

I am not trying to escape

ABLAMORE

Ah ! Ah ! That is because you imagine these old hands of mine are powerless ! There is strength enough in them still to tear out a secret, wheresoever it be (*He seizes her by the arms*) There is strength enough in them still to combat those you prefer (*He forces her arms behind her head*) Ah, you refuse to speak ! But the moment will come when the pain will force your soul to rush forth, like clear water

ALLADINE

No, no !

ABLAMORE

Again ? We are not at the end, then , the road is long , and truth is ashamed, and hides behind the rocks
Is it coming ? I see it moving in your eyes , I feel its soft breath on my cheek Oh Alladine, Alladine ! (*he suddenly releases her*) I heard your bones lament, like little children I have not hurt you ? Do not kneel to me—it is I who must go on my knees before you I am a monster
Have pity It is not for myself alone that I have besought this of you I have only this one poor daughter The others are dead
Once there were seven around me They were beautiful, radiant with joy, I have never seen them again The only one who was left to me was also about to die She had no desire to live
Then there was a sudden, unexpected meeting,

and I saw she no longer craved for death I
ask nothing impossible of you

[Alladine weeps, but makes no answer]

SCENE IV

Astolaine's room

ASTOLAINE and PALOMIDES are discovered

PALOMIDES

Astolaine, when it so fell about that I met you, some few months ago, I seemed at last to have found what I had sought for many years. Till then, I had no suspicion of all that real goodness meant, its sweetness and tenderness, I was blind to the perfect simplicity of a truly beautiful soul. And these things stirred me so deeply that it seemed to be the first time in my life that I stood before a human being. I seemed to have spent all my days in an airless chamber, and it was you who flung open the door — and I knew then what other men's souls must be, what my soul, too, might become. Since then, I have drawn closer to you. I have seen the things that you did, and others, too, have spoken of you.

There were evenings when I wandered away from you, silently, and sought a secluded spot in the palace, and could not keep back my tears as I thought of you, and wondered, though you only had raised your eyes, it may be, or made some little unconscious gesture, or smiled, perhaps, for

ALLADINE AND ACT II SC IV

no visible reason, and yet at the very moment that the souls around you craved for this smile, and needed it, for their comfort You alone know of these moments, for it would seem that your soul contains the soul of each one of us, and I cannot believe that those who have not drawn near to you can tell what the true life may be And I speak of all this to-day because I feel that I never shall be what I had hoped that I might become Fate has stepped out towards me, or I, it may be, have beckoned to Fate, for we never know whether we ourselves have gone forth or Fate have come seeking us—something has happened whereby my eyes have been opened, at the very moment that we were about to draw unhappiness down on us, and I recognised that there must be a power more incomprehensible than the beauty of the most beautiful face, the most beautiful soul, and mightier too, since I must perforce give way to it I know not whether you understand In that case, pity me I have said to myself all that could be said I know what it is that I lose, I know that her soul is the soul of a child, of a poor and helpless child, by the side of your soul. and for all that I cannot resist .

ASTOLAIINE

Do not weep I too am well aware that we are not always able to do the thing we prefer I was not unprepared for your coming There must indeed be laws mightier than those of the soul, whereof we for ever are speaking . (*she suddenly*

kisses him)—But I love you the more for it, my poor Palomides

PALOMIDES

I love you, too more than her whom I love . .
Are you crying, too ?

ASTOLAINE

They are little tears let them not sadden you. . . .
My tears fall because I am a woman , but women's
tears, they say, are not painful See, my eyes
are already dry I was well aware of it
I knew I should soon be awakened And now
that it is over I can breathe more freely, for I am
no longer happy That is all We must con-
sider what had best be done, for you and for her
I am afraid my father suspects

[They go out

ACT III

SCENE I

An apartment in the palace

*ABLAMORE is discovered ASTOLAINE is standing on the
threshold of a half-opened door at the end of the room*

ASTOLAINE

Father, I have come to you in obedience to a voice within
me that I can no longer resist You know all that
took place in my soul when I met Palomides He

ALLADINE AND ACT III SC I

seemed different from other men To-day I
 come to you seeking your help for I know not
 what I had best say to him I have realised
 that I cannot love It is not he who has
 changed, but I—or perhaps I did not understand
 And since it is impossible for me to love the man I
 had selected from among them all with the love I had
 dreamed of, it must needs be that those things cannot
 touch my heart I know it now My eyes
 shall no longer stray to the paths of love and you
 will see me living by your side without sorrow and
 without disquiet I feel that I am about to be
 happy

ABLAMORE

Come nearer to me, Astolaine It was not thus that in
 days gone by you were wont to speak to your father
 You stand there, on the threshold of a half-closed
 door, as though anxious to fly from me, you keep
 your hand on the key, as though you desired forever
 to hide from me the secret of your heart You know
 full well that I have not understood what you have
 said to me, that words have no meaning when
 soul is not near unto soul Come closer to me—you
 need tell me no more (*Astolaine approaches slowly*)
 There comes a moment when soul meets soul, when
 all is known to them though the lips remain closed

Come closer, closer still They are even
 yet too far apart, these souls of ours—their light is
 so feeble around us! (*Astolaine suddenly halts*)
 You are afraid?—You know how far one may go?
 —Then it is I will come to you. (*He moves*)

ACT III SC II PALOMIDES

*slowly towards Astolaine, stands in front of her and
gazes fixedly at her*) I see you, Astolaine

ASTOLAINE

Father ! (*She bursts into tears and sobs in the old
man's breast*)

ABLAMORE

You see how useless it was

SCENE II

A room in the palace

Enter ALLADINE and PALOMIDES

PALOMIDES

To-morrow all will be ready We must not wait any longer He is wandering like a madman through the palace corridors , I met him but a short time ago He looked at me, but said nothing , I passed on, but, when I turned round, I saw that he was laughing to himself and flourishing a bunch of keys When he saw that I was watching him, he nodded, and smiled, and tried to look friendly He must be nursing some secret scheme—we are in the hands of a master whose reason is tottering To-morrow we shall be far away Out yonder there are wonderful countries that are more like your own Astolaine has already prepared for our flight and for that of my sisters . .

ALLADINE.

What did she say ?

o

ALLADINE AND ACT III SC II

PALOMIDES

Nothing, nothing We shall be on the sea for days,
then days of forest—and afterwards we shall come to
the lakes and mountains that surround my father's
castle, and you will see how different they are from
everything here, where the sky is like the roof of
a cavern and the black trees are done to death by
the storms Ours is a sky beneath which none
are afraid, our forests are full of life, and with us the
flowers never close

ALLADINE

Did she cry?

PALOMIDES

Why these questions? That is a thing of which we
have no right to speak—do you hear? Her life has
nothing in common with our poor life, love must
perforce be silent before it dare approach her
When I think of her, we seem to be beggars, you
and I, and clothed in rags Leave me, leave me!
. . For I could say things to you .

ALLADINE

Palomides! What has happened?

PALOMIDES

Go, go I saw tears that came not from the eyes,
but from far beyond For there are other
things And yet we are right, perhaps, but oh
God, if that be so how sorry I am to be right!
Go, go I will tell you to-morrow, to-morrow,
to-morrow . [*They go out by different ways*]

ACT III SC III PALOMIDES

SCENE III

A corridor in front of Alladine's room

Enter ASTOLAINÉ and the SISTERS OF PALOMIDES

ASTOLAINÉ

The horses are waiting in the forest, but Palomides refuses to fly, although your lives are in peril as well as his own. I no longer recognise my poor father. He has a fixed idea which unhinges his reason. I have been following him, the last three days, step by step, crouching behind walls and pillars, for he will suffer no one to accompany him. To-day, with the first rays of dawn, he again set forth and wandered through the rooms of the palace, and the corridors, and along the moat and the ramparts, waving the great golden keys he has had made, and chanting loudly the strange song whose refrain, "Go where your eyes may lead," may perhaps have reached you even in your rooms. Hitherto I have told you nothing of all this, for these are things whereof one should not speak without cause. He must have confined Alladine in this room, but no one knows what he has done to her. I have watched every night, and run to the door, and listened, the moment he had turned away, but I have heard not a sound in the room. Can you hear anything?

ONE OF THE SISTERS OF PALOMIDES

Only the murmur of the air as it passes through the crevice in the wall .

ALLADINE AND ACT III SC III.

ANOTHER SISTER

When I listen I seem only to hear the great pendulum, as
it swings to and fro

A THIRD SISTER

But who is this little Alladine, and why is he so angry
with her ?

ASTOLAINE

She is a little Greek slave, who has come from the depths
of Arcady He is not angry with her, but
Hark, there he is (*Someone is heard singing in the
distance*) Hide behind these pillars He has given
orders that no one should pass along this corridor
(*They hide Ablamore comes in, singing, and
flourishing a great bunch of keys*)

ABLAMORE (*sings*)

Unhappiness had three keys of gold
—But the queen is not yet freed—
Unhappiness had three keys of gold
Go where your eyes may lead

[*He seems terribly weary and lets himself fall on to
the bench that faces Alladine's room, for some
little time still he murmurs his song, then falls
asleep, his hands hanging down by his side and
his head sinking on to his shoulder*]

ASTOLAINE

Come, and make no noise He has fallen asleep on the
bench Oh my poor father ! How white his hair
has grown these last few days ! He is so unhappy,

ACT III SC III PALOMIDES

so weak, that even sleep can bring no comfort to
him For three whole days I have not dared look
into his face

ONE OF THE SISTERS OF PALOMIDES

He sleeps profoundly

ASTOLAINE

Yes, but one can see that his soul is not at rest
The sun is beating down on his eyes I will
draw his cloak over his face

ANOTHER SISTER

No, no, do not touch him, you might startle him, wake him

ASTOLAINE

There is someone coming along the corridor Do
you stand in front of him, and hide him It
would not be right that a stranger should behold him
thus

ONE OF THE SISTERS

It is Palomides

ASTOLAINE

I will cover up those poor eyes (*She spreads the
cloak over Ablamore's face*) Palomides must not
see him like this . He is too unhappy . .

Enter PALOMIDES

PALOMIDES

What has happened ?

ONE OF THE SISTERS

He has fallen asleep on the bench

ALLADINE AND ACT III SC III

PALOMIDES

He could not see me, but I have been following him . .
He has said nothing ?

ASTOLAINE

No , but see how he has suffered . .

PALOMIDES

Has he the keys ?

ANOTHER SISTER

He is holding them in his hand

PALOMIDES

I will take them from him

ASTOLAINE

What do you mean to do ? Oh be careful--do not wake
him For three nights now he has been roaming
through the palace.

PALOMIDES

I will unclasp his hand gently--he will not feel it We
dare not wait any longer God alone can tell what
he has done ! He will forgive us when his reason
returns Oh ! how weak his hands are !

ASTOLAINE

Be careful--oh be careful !

PALOMIDES

I have the keys--which one is it ? I will open the door

ONE OF THE SISTERS

I am frightened--do not open it yet . . Palomides .

ACT III SC III PALOMIDES

PALOMIDES

Stay here I know not what I shall find .
[*He goes to the door, opens it and enters the room*]

ASTOLAINE

Is she there ?

PALOMIDES (*from within the room*)

I can see nothing—the shutters are closed .

ASTOLAINE

Be careful, Palomides Let me go first . . Your
voice is trembling

PALOMIDES

No, no a ray of sunlight is stealing through the
chinks of the shutters

ONE OF THE SISTERS

Yes—the sun is shining brightly outside

PALOMIDES (*suddenly emerging from the room*)

Come, quickly !—I believe that she . . .

ASTOLAINE

You have seen her ?

PALOMIDES

She is lying on the bed She does not move . . I
do not think that— Come in !

[*They all enter the room*]

ALLADINE AND ACT III SC III

ASTOLAINE AND THE SISTERS OF PALOMIDES (*inside
the room*)

Here she is. No, no, she is not dead. Alladine,
Alladine! Oh, poor child Do not scream .
She has fainted They have tied her hair round
her mouth and fastened her hands behind her
they are fastened with her hair Alladine,
Alladine! Quick, get some water
[*Ablamore has awakened and appears on the threshold*]

ASTOLAINE

My father is there!

ABLAMORE (*going up to Palomides*)

Was it you who opened the door of this room?

PALOMIDES

Yes, I—I did it—and then—and then? I cannot
let her die before my eyes See what you have
done Alladine! Be not afraid She is
opening her eyes I will not endure

ABLAMORE

Do not speak so loudly Come, let us open the shutters
We cannot see, in here. Alladine Ah,
she has already got up Come you too, Alladine
Look, my children, how dark it is in the room
As dark as though we were thousands of feet under-
ground But I have only to open a shutter, and see!
All the light of the sky, all the light of the sun! .
It calls for no mighty effort—the light is eager enough
We have only to call—it will never fail to obey

ACT IV

PALOMIDES

Do you see the river out yonder, with the islands
in its midst, all covered with flowers? The sky
to-day might be a ring of crystal Alladine,
Palomides, look Come nigh unto heaven, both
of you Kiss each other, with this new light
upon you I bear you no ill-will You have
done what was ordained, and so have I too
Lean for one instant out of this open window, look
once again at the trees and the flowers

[*A silence He quietly closes the shutters*

ACT IV

SCENE

Vast subterranean grottoes

ALLADINE and PALOMIDES are *discovered*

PALOMIDES

They have bandaged my eyes and bound my hands . .

ALLADINE

My hands are bound too, my eyes are bandaged . . I
believe my hands are bleeding

PALOMIDES

Wait, wait Oh how grateful I am to-day for my strength.
I feel that the knots are giving I will
try once more, though I burst every vein . Once

ALLADINE AND

ACT IV.

more still—ah, my hands are free ! (*he tears off the bandage*) and my eyes too !

ALLADINE

You can see ?

PALOMIDES

Yes

ALLADINE

Where are we ?

PALOMIDES

I cannot see you

ALLADINE

I am here, here

PALOMIDES

The tears still stream down my eyes from the effects
of the bandage We are not in darkness
Is it you that I hear, out yonder, close to the
light ?

ALLADINE

I am here, come to me .

PALOMIDES

You are on the edge of the light Do not move, I cannot
tell what there is all around you My eyes still
remember the bandage They drew it so tight that
my eyelids have nigh burst in twain

ALLADINE

Come quickly, the cords suffocate me I can wait no
longer

PALOMIDES

I hear only a voice that comes forth from the light .

ALLADINE

Where are you ?

PALOMIDES

I know not I am still groping in darkness . .
Speak again, that I may know where to look for
you . You seem to be in the midst of infinite
radiance .

ALLADINE

Come to me, oh come ! I have suffered in silence but
now can endure it no longer

PALOMIDES (*feeling his way along*)

Is that you ? I thought you so far away ! My tears had
deceived me But now I am here and can see you
Oh, your hands are wounded ! The blood has dropped
down from them on to your dress , the cords have
sunk into your flesh And I have nothing to cut
them with—they have taken away my dagger I
must tear them off Wait, wait—I have found the
knots

ALLADINE

First take off this bandage which blinds me

PALOMIDES

I cannot I am dazzled I seem to be caught in
the midst of innumerable threads of gold . .

ALLADINE

My hands, then, my hands !

PALOMIDES

The cords are of silk Wait, the knots are giving.

ALLADINE AND

ACT IV.

They have wound the cord round thirty times
There, there !— Oh how your hands are bleeding !
They look as though they were dead

ALLADINE

No, no, they live, they live ! See !

*[No sooner are her hands freed than she flings them
around Palomides' neck and embraces him pas-
sionately*

PALOMIDES

Alladine !

ALLADINE

Palomides !

PALOMIDES

Alladine, Alladine !

ALLADINE

I am happy now I have waited so long ! . . .

PALOMIDES

I was afraid to come

ALLADINE

I am happy I want to see you . . .

PALOMIDES

They have fastened the bandage so tight that it might be
a helmet of steel Do not move, I have found
the gold threads

ALLADINE

Yes, yes, I will move . . .

[She throws her arms round him, and kisses him again.

ACT IV

PALOMIDES

PALOMIDES

Be careful. Do not turn round I am afraid of hurting
you . .

ALLADINE

Tear it off! Do not mind There is nothing can hurt
me now

PALOMIDES

I too want to see you .

ALLADINE

Tear it off, tear it off! I am far beyond reach of pain!
Tear it off! You do not know how gladly
I would die Where are we?

PALOMIDES

You will see, you will see We are in the midst
of innumerable grottos there are great blue
caverns, with shining pillars, and lofty arches . .

ALLADINE

Why do you answer when I speak to you?

PALOMIDES

I care not where we are so we be but together . .

ALLADINE

Already you love me less .

PALOMIDES

What do you mean?

ALLADINE

Do I need to be told where I am, when it is on your

ALLADINE AND

ACT IV

heart that I lie ? I beseech you, tear off the bandage ! It shall not be like one who is blind that I enter your soul What are you doing, Palomides ? You do not laugh when I laugh, or cry when I cry You do not clap your hands when I clap mine, you do not tremble when I speak and tremble in the depths of my heart The bandage, the bandage ! I want to see ! .
Tear it off, pull it over my hair ! (*she tears off the bandage*) Oh !

PALOMIDES

You can see ?

ALLADINE

Yes, I see you . and only you .

PALOMIDES

What is it, Alladine ? Why are your kisses already so sorrowful ?

ALLADINE

Where are we ?

PALOMIDES

Why do you ask that so sadly ?

ALLADINE

I am not sad, but I scarcely can open my eyes . .

PALOMIDES

I feel as though your joy had fallen on my lips as a child
might fall on the threshold of its father's house
Do not turn from me I am afraid of your leaving
me, afraid lest this all be a dream

ALLADINE

Where are we ?

PALOMIDES

In the midst of caverns I never have seen . . Does it not seem as though more light were coming towards us ?—When I opened my eyes all was dark , now, little by little, all seems to be clear to me I have often heard of the marvellous caverns that lay beneath Ablamore's palace , these must be they No one ever went into them , and only the King had the keys I knew that the sea flooded those that lay deepest , and the light we behold is doubtless thrown up by the sea They thought they were burying us in darkness They came hither with lanterns and torches, and saw only blackness , but the light comes to us who have nothing It grows brighter and brighter It must be the dawn that is piercing the ocean, and sending us, through the green waves, all the purity of its innocent soul .

ALLADINE

How long have we been here ?

PALOMIDES.

I cannot tell I had made no effort until I heard your voice .

ALLADINE

I know not how it all happened I was asleep in the room where you had found me , when I awoke my eyes were bound and my two hands tied to my belt . .

ALLADINE AND

ACT IV

heart that I lie ? I beseech you, tear off the bandage ! It shall not be like one who is blind that I enter your soul What are you doing, Palomides ? You do not laugh when I laugh, or cry when I cry You do not clap your hands when I clap mine , you do not tremble when I speak and tremble in the depths of my heart The bandage, the bandage ! I want to see ! . Tear it off, pull it over my hair ! *(she tears off the bandage)* Oh !

PALOMIDES

You can see ?

ALLADINE

Yes, I see you and only you .

PALOMIDES

What is it, Alladine ? Why are your kisses already so sorrowful ?

ALLADINE

Where are we ?

PALOMIDES

Why do you ask that so sadly ?

ALLADINE

I am not sad, but I scarcely can open my eyes . . .

PALOMIDES

I feel as though your joy had fallen on my lips as a child might fall on the threshold of its father's house
Do not turn from me I am afraid of your leaving me, afraid lest this all be a dream

ALLADINE

Where are we ?

PALOMIDES

In the midst of caverns I never have seen Does it
not seem as though more light were coming towards
us ?—When I opened my eyes all was dark , now,
little by little, all seems to be clear to me I have
often heard of the marvellous caverns that lay beneath
Ablamore's palace , these must be they No one ever
went into them , and only the King had the keys
I knew that the sea flooded those that lay deepest ,
and the light we behold is doubtless thrown up by
the sea They thought they were burying us
in darkness They came hither with lanterns and
torches, and saw only blackness , but the light
comes to us who have nothing It grows brighter
and brighter It must be the dawn that is pierc-
ing the ocean, and sending us, through the green
waves, all the purity of its innocent soul . .

ALLADINE

How long have we been here ?

PALOMIDES

I cannot tell I had made no effort until I heard
your voice .

ALLADINE

I know not how it all happened I was asleep in the
room where you had found me , when I awoke
my eyes were bound and my two hands tied to
my belt . .

ALLADINE AND

ACT IV

PALOMIDES

I too was asleep I heard nothing, and before I could open my eyes the bandage was over them I struggled fiercely, in the darkness, but they were stronger than I They must have led me through deep-lying vaults, for I could feel the cold dripping on to my shoulders, I went down and down so long that I could not keep count of the steps They said nothing to you ?

ALLADINE

Not a word But I could hear that someone was weeping as he walked by my side, and then I fainted .

PALOMIDES (*kissing her*)

Alladine !

ALLADINE

How gravely you kiss me

PALOMIDES

Do not close your eyes when I kiss you I want to look into your heart and see my kisses quivering there, and the dew that steals up from your soul never again shall we know such kisses as these .

ALLADINE

Always, always !

PALOMIDES

Not so, for our lips meet now over the bosom of death, and that can happen but once Oh, you are beautiful thus ! It is the first time that I have been near to you, that I have looked into your

eyes It is strange, people pass by each other
and think they have seen, yet how does everything
change the moment the lips have met There,
do as you will I stretch out my arms to admire
you as though you no longer were mine, then I
bring them together until I again meet you kiss,
and I see only joy everlasting We needed this
unearthly light! (*He kisses her again*) Ah!
what have you done? Be careful, we are on the
crest of a rock that hangs over the light-giving
water Do not move It was time Do not
turn round too quickly I was dazzled

ALLADINE (*turning and looking at the blue water whence
the light is thrown up*)

Oh! . . .

PALOMIDES

It seems as though the sky itself were flowing towards
us

ALLADINE

It is full of motionless flowers .

PALOMIDES

Full of strange and motionless flowers . See, there is one
out yonder, larger than all the others, that shoots out
its petals beneath them One can almost hear
the rhythmic beat of its life. And the water,
if water it be, seems bluer, more beautiful, purer than
all the waters of earth

ALLADINE

I am afraid to look any longer . .

ALLADINE AND

ACT IV

PALOMIDES

See how the light now shines over all The light dare
no longer waver and in the vestibule of heaven do
we kiss one another Look at the jewels in the
roof they are drunk with life, they seem to smile on
us , look at the myriad roses, of deep glowing blue,
that twine themselves all round the pillars . .

ALLADINE

Oh ! . . I heard ! . . .

PALOMIDES

What ?

ALLADINE

I heard someone striking the rocks . .

PALOMIDES

No, no , it is only the golden gates of an unknown heaven
that are flung open wide in our soul, and sing as they
turn on their hinges !

ALLADINE

Listen again, again ! .

PALOMIDES (*with a sudden change of voice*)

Yes , it is out yonder . beneath the vault that is
bluest of all .

ALLADINE

They are coming to . . .

PALOMIDES

I hear the iron striking the rock They walled up
the door, perhaps, or are unable to open it . .

The axes scrunch on the stone His soul has
whispered to him that we were happy

*[A silence, then a stone falls away from the extreme
end of the roof, and a ray of daylight breaks into
the cavern*

ALLADINE

Oh ' . .

PALOMIDES

This light is different .

*[They stand there, motionless, anxiously watching
stone after stone as it slides slowly away and falls
to the ground, beneath a light that can scarcely
be borne, a light that streams into the cavern with
ever more resistless abundance, revealing little
by little the wretchedness of the grotto that had
seemed so marvellous to them, the miraculous
lake becomes dull and sinister, the light fades out
of the stones in the rocks, and the ardent roses
are seen to be nothing but fungus and decaying
matter At last a whole side of the rock falls
bodily into the grotto The sun streams in, over
whelming all Shouts and cries are heard from
without Alladine and Palomides draw back*

PALOMIDES

Where are we ?

ALLADINE *(embracing him sadly)*.

And yet do I love you, Palomides .

PALOMIDES

I love you too, my Alladine

ALLADINE AND

ACT IV.

ALLADINE

They are coming

PALOMIDES (*looking behind him as they retreat still further*)

Take care

ALLADINE

No, no, we need no longer take care . .

PALOMIDES (*looking at her*)

Alladine ?

ALLADINE

Yes

[*They retreat further and further before the invasion of light or danger, until at length they lose their footing, they fall, and disappear behind the rock that overhangs the subterranean water, now all enwrapped in gloom. There is a moment's silence, then Astolaine and the sisters of Palomides enter the grotto*]

ASTOLAINE

Where are they ?

ONE OF PALOMIDES' SISTERS

Palomides !

ASTOLAINE.

Alladine, Alladine !

ANOTHER SISTER

Palomides ! We are here !

A THIRD SISTER

Fear nothing , we are alone !

ACT IV

PALOMIDES

ASTOLAINÉ

Come to us , we are here to save you !

A FOURTH SISTER

Ablamore has fled

A FIFTH SISTER

He is no longer in the palace

A SIXTH SISTER

They do not answer

ASTOLAINÉ

I heard a movement in the water—this way, this way !

*[They rush to the rock that hangs over the subter-
anean water]*

ONE OF THE SISTERS

There they are !

ANOTHER SISTER

Yes, yes, at the bottom of the black water . They are
lying in each other's arms

A THIRD SISTER

They are dead !

A FOURTH SISTER

No, no, they live, they live Look . .

THE OTHER SISTERS

Help ! Help ! Call for help !

ASTOLAINÉ

They make no effort to save themselves . .

ALLADINE AND

ACT V

ACT V

SCENE

A corridor. It is so long that the last arches seem to be lost in a kind of inner horizon. Innumerable doors, all of them closed, are seen on both sides of the corridor, the sisters of Palomides stand before one of these over which they seem to keep guard. A little further, on the opposite side, Astolaine stands, speaking to the doctor, in front of a door which is also closed.

ASTOLAINE (*to the doctor*)

Hitherto nothing had happened, in this palace, where all seemed to have been steeped in slumber since the death of my sisters, then a strange unreasoning restlessness seized hold of my poor father—he began to chafe under this tranquillity that yet would seem to be the least dangerous form of happiness. Some time ago—his reason must have already been shaken—he climbed to the top of the tower, and stretched both his arms out, timidly, towards mountain and sea, and said to me—with a diffident smile, for he saw that I looked incredulous—that he was summoning to us the events that too long had remained concealed in the horizon. Alas, the events have come more quickly, more numerous too, than he had expected, and it has needed a few days only for them to dethrone him and reign in his stead. He was the first of their victims. He fled to the meadows, singing and weeping, the night he had caused little Alladine and ill-fated Palomides to be entombed in the grotto. And since then no

one has seen him I have sent men in search of him all over the country, and even on to the sea They have found not a trace of him But at least I had hoped to save those on whom he had unconsciously brought this suffering, he who always had been the tenderest of men and the best of fathers, but here too I fear I have come too late I know nothing of what took place So far they have said not a word It appears that they thought, when they heard the iron crushing the stone and the light streamed into the cave, that my father regretted the respite he had accorded and that they who approached brought death Or it may be that they lost their footing as they retreated along the rock which hangs over the lake, and fell in by accident But the water there is not deep, and we had no difficulty in saving them At present it is you, and you only, on whom all depends

[The sisters of Palomides have drawn near to them]

THE DOCTOR

They are suffering both from the same disease, and it is one that I know not of — But I have little hope It may be that the chill of that underground water has seized hold of them, or the water itself perhaps may be poisonous The decomposed body of Alladine's lamb has been found there — I will come again this evening In the meantime, they need silence Life has ebbed very low in their heart Do not enter their rooms, or speak to them, for in their present state the least word may be fatal They must try to forget one another *[He goes]*

ALLADINE AND

ACT V

ONE OF PALOMIDES' SISTERS

I can see that he is going to die

ASTOLAINÉ

No, no . . . do not weep at his age death does not
come so quickly

ANOTHER SISTER

Why was your father so angry with our poor brother ?
He had no cause

THE THIRD SISTER

I believe your father must have loved Alladine . .

ASTOLAINÉ

Do not speak of him thus He thought I was un-
happy He imagined he was doing right, and did
wrong without knowing it That happens often
to us all I remember now One night I
was asleep, and wept in my dream We have
so little courage when we dream I awoke ;
he was standing by my bedside, looking at me
And he misunderstood, perhaps

THE FOURTH SISTER (*hurrying towards them*)

I heard Alladine move in her room . .

ASTOLAINÉ

Go to the door, listen—it is perhaps only the nurse . .

THE FIFTH SISTER

No, no, I can hear the nurse's footsteps . This
noise is different . .

ACT V

PALOMIDES

THE SIXTH SISTER

I believe Palomides has moved too . I seemed to
hear a voice that was striving to speak

THE VOICE OF ALLADINE (*very feebly, from within the
room*)

Palomides !

ONE OF THE SISTERS.

She is calling to him ! .

ASTOLAINE

We must take care ! Go, stand in front of the door,
so that Palomides may not hear

THE VOICE OF ALLADINE

Palomides !

ASTOLAINE

O God, O God, silence that voice ! If Palomides hears it,
he will die !

THE VOICE OF PALOMIDES (*very feebly, from within
another room*)

Alladine !

ONE OF THE SISTERS.

He is answering !

ASTOLAINE

Do three of you stay here , the rest of us will go to the
other door Come, we must hasten—we will
surround them, try to protect them Lie right
against the panels—perhaps they will not hear

ONE OF THE SISTERS

I will go in to Alladine

ALLADINE AND

ACT V.

THE SECOND SISTER

Yes, yes, prevent her from calling again . .

THE THIRD SISTER

It is she who has caused all this sorrow .

ASTOLAINE

You shall not go in, or if you do then will I go to
Palomides She had the same right to live as the
rest of us, and she has done nothing more
But to be unable to stifle these death-dealing words
as they pass by us! We can do nothing, my
sisters, my poor sisters, we can do nothing, and the
hand cannot stay the soul! . .

THE VOICE OF ALLADINE

Palomides—is that you?

THE VOICE OF PALOMIDES.

Where are you, Alladine?

THE VOICE OF ALLADINE

Is it you that I hear moaning, far away from me?

THE VOICE OF PALOMIDES

Is it you that I have heard calling me?—I cannot see
you .

THE VOICE OF ALLADINE

Your voice seems to have lost all hope

THE VOICE OF PALOMIDES

Yours seems already to have passed through death. . .

ACT V

PALOMIDES

THE VOICE OF ALLADINE

Your voice scarcely reaches my room .

THE VOICE OF PALOMIDES

Nor does yours sound to me as it used to sound . .

THE VOICE OF ALLADINE

I had pity on you ! .

THE VOICE OF PALOMIDES

They have parted us, but I always shall love you . .

THE VOICE OF ALLADINE

I had pity on you are you suffering still ?

THE VOICE OF PALOMIDES

I suffer no more, but I want to see you . .

THE VOICE OF ALLADINE

Never again shall we see one another, for the doors are
all closed

THE VOICE OF PALOMIDES

There is that in your voice that tells me you love me no
longer

THE VOICE OF ALLADINE

Yes, yes, I love you still, but now all is sorrow

THE VOICE OF PALOMIDES

You are turning away . . I scarcely can hear
you . .

THE VOICE OF ALLADINE

We seem to be hundreds of miles from each other . .

ALLADINE AND

ACT V.

THE VOICE OF PALOMIDES

I have tried to rise, but my soul is too heavy . .

THE VOICE OF ALLADINE

I have tried, too, but my head fell back .

THE VOICE OF PALOMIDES

As I listen I seem to hear your tears fall .

THE VOICE OF ALLADINE

No , for a long time I wept , but now these are no longer
tears

THE VOICE OF PALOMIDES

You are thinking of something that you will not tell
me

THE VOICE OF ALLADINE

They were not jewels

THE VOICE OF PALOMIDES.

And the flowers were not real

ONE OF PALOMIDES' SISTERS

They are delirious .

ASTOLAINE

No, no , they are well aware of what they are saying . .

THE VOICE OF ALLADINE

It was the light that had no pity

ACT V.

PALOMIDES

THE VOICE OF PALOMIDES

Whither go you, Alladine ? You seem to be further and further away from me

THE VOICE OF ALLADINE

I no longer regret the rays of the sun

THE VOICE OF PALOMIDES

Yes, yes, we shall again behold the trees and the flowers !

THE VOICE OF ALLADINE

I have lost the desire to live

[A silence, then more and more feebly]

THE VOICE OF PALOMIDES

Alladine !

THE VOICE OF ALLADINE.

Palomides !

THE VOICE OF PALOMIDES

Alla—dine

[A silence Astolaine and the sisters of Palomides are listening in intense anguish Then the nurse throws open the door of Palomides' room from within, appears on the threshold, and beckons to them, they all follow her into the room and close the door Once more there is silence Then the door of Alladine's room opens, the other nurse comes out and looks about her in the corridor, seeing no one she goes back into the room, leaving the door wide open]

INTERIOR

TRANSLATED BY WILLIAM ARCHER

CHARACTERS

IN THE GARDEN—

THE OLD MAN.

THE STEANGER.

MARTHA } *Granddaughters of the Old Man.*
MARY }

A PEASANT.

THE CROWD.

IN THE HOUSE—

THE FATHER

THE MOTHER

THE TWO DAUGHTERS } *Silent personages*

THE CHILD }

INTERIOR

An old garden planted with willows At the back, a house, with three of the ground-floor windows lighted up Through them a family is pretty distinctly visible, gathered for the evening round the lamp The Father is seated at the chimney-corner The Mother, resting one elbow on the table, is gazing into vacancy Two young girls, dressed in white, sit at their embroidery, dreaming and smiling in the tranquillity of the room A child is asleep, his head resting on his mother's left arm When one of them rises, walks, or makes a gesture, the movements appear grave, slow, apart, and as though spiritualised by the distance, the light, and the transparent film of the window panes

*The OLD MAN and the STRANGER enter the garden
cautiously*

THE OLD MAN

Here we are in the part of the garden that lies behind the house They never come here The doors are on the other side They are closed and the shutters shut But there are no shutters on this side of the house, and I saw the light Yes, they are still sitting up in the lamplight It is well that they have not heard us, the mother or the girls would perhaps have come out, and then what should we have done ?

INTERIOR

THE STRANGER

What are we going to do ?

THE OLD MAN

I want first to see if they are all in the room Yes, I see
the father seated at the chimney corner He is doing
nothing, his hands resting on his knees The mother
is leaning her elbow on the table .

THE STRANGER.

She is looking at us

THE OLD MAN

No, she is looking at nothing, her eyes are fixed She
cannot see us, we are in the shadow of the great
trees But do not go any nearer There, too,
are the dead girl's two sisters, they are embroidering
slowly And the little child has fallen asleep It is
nine on the clock in the corner They divine
no evil, and they do not speak

THE STRANGER

If we were to attract the father's attention, and make
some sign to him? He has turned his head this
way Shall I knock at one of the windows? One
of them will have to hear of it before the others . .

THE OLD MAN

I do not know which to choose We must be very
careful The father is old and ailing—the mother

INTERIOR

too—and the sisters are too young And they
all loved her as they will never love again I have
never seen a happier household No, no! do
not go up to the window, that would be the worst
thing we could do It is better that we should tell
them of it as simply as we can, as though it were a
commonplace occurrence, and we must not appear
too sad, else they will feel that their sorrow must
exceed ours, and they will not know what to do
Let us go round to the other side of the garden
We will knock at the door, and go in as if nothing
had happened I will go in first they will not be
surprised to see me, I sometimes look in of an
evening, to bring them some flowers or fruit, and to
pass an hour or two with them

THE STRANGER

Why do you want me to go with you? Go alone, I will
wait until you call me They have never seen me—
I am only a passer-by, a stranger

THE OLD MAN

It is better that I should not be alone A misfortune
announced by a single voice seems more definite
and crushing I thought of that as I came along
If I go in alone, I shall have to speak at the
very first moment, they will know all in a few
words, I shall have nothing more to say, and I
dread the silence which follows the last words that
tell of a misfortune It is then that the heart is
torn If we enter together, I shall go roundabout to
work, I shall tell them, for example “They found

INTERIOR

her thus, or thus She was floating on the
stream, and her hands were clasped ”

THE STRANGER

Her hands were not clasped, her arms were floating at
her sides

THE OLD MAN

You see, in spite of ourselves we begin to talk—and the
misfortune is shrouded in its details. Otherwise, if
I go in alone, I know them well enough to be sure
that the very first words would produce a terrible
effect, and God knows what would happen. But
if we speak to them in turns, they will listen to us,
and will forget to look the evil tidings in the face.
Do not forget that the mother will be there, and that
her life hangs by a thread. It is well that the
first wave of sorrow should waste its strength in
unnecessary words. It is wisest to let people gather
round the unfortunate and talk as they will. Even
the most indifferent carry off, without knowing it,
some portion of the sorrow. It is dispersed without
effort and without noise, like air or light.

THE STRANGER

Your clothes are soaked and are dripping on the flag-
stones

THE OLD MAN

It is only the skirt of my mantle that has trailed a little
in the water. You seem to be cold. Your coat is
all muddy. I did not notice it on the way, it
was so dark.

INTERIOR

THE STRANGER

I went into the water up to my waist

THE OLD MAN

Had you found her long when I came up ?

THE STRANGER

Only a few moments I was going towards the village ,
it was already late, and the dusk was falling on the
river bank I was walking along with my eyes fixed
on the river, because it was lighter than the road,
when I saw something strange close by a tuft of
reeds I drew nearer, and I saw her hair,
which had floated up almost into a circle round
her head, and was swaying hither and thither with
the current

*[In the room, the two young girls turn their heads
towards the window*

THE OLD MAN

Did you see her two sisters' hair trembling on their
shoulders ?

THE STRANGER

They turned their heads in our direction—they simply
turned their heads Perhaps I was speaking too
loudly (*The two girls resume their former position*)
They have turned away again already I went
into the water up to my waist, and then I managed
to grasp her hand and easily drew her to the bank
She was as beautiful as her sisters

INTERIOR

THE OLD MAN

I think she was more beautiful I do not know
why I have lost all my courage

THE STRANGER

What courage do you mean ? We did all that man could
do She had been dead for more than a hour

THE OLD MAN

She was living this morning ! I met her coming out of
the church She told me that she was going away ,
she was going to see her grandmother on the other
side of the river in which you found her She did
not know when I should see her again She
seemed to be on the point of asking me something ,
then I suppose she did not dare, and she left me
abruptly But now that I think of it—and I noticed
nothing at the time !—she smiled as people smile who
want to be silent, or who fear that they will not be
understood Even hope seemed like a pain to
her , her eyes were veiled, and she scarcely looked
at me

THE STRANGER

Some peasants told me that they saw her wandering
all the afternoon upon the bank They thought
she was looking for flowers . It is possible
that her death

THE OLD MAN

No one can tell What can anyone know ? She
was perhaps one of those who shrink from speech,
and everyone bears in his breast more than one
reason for ceasing to live You cannot see into

INTERIOR

the soul as you see into that room. They are all like that—they say nothing but trivial things, and no one dreams that there is aught amiss. You live for months by the side of one who is no longer of this world, and whose soul cannot stoop to it, you answer her unthinkingly, and you see what happens. They look like lifeless puppets, and all the time so many things are passing in their souls. They do not themselves know what they are. She might have lived as the others live. She might have said to the day of her death, “Sir, or Madam, it will rain this morning,” or, “We are going to lunch, we shall be thirteen at table,” or “The fruit is not yet ripe.” They speak smilingly of the flowers that have fallen, and they weep in the darkness. An angel from heaven would not see what ought to be seen, and men understand nothing until after all is over.

Yesterday evening she was there, sitting in the lamplight, like her sisters, and you would not see them now as they ought to be seen if this had not happened.

I seem to see her for the first time.

Something new must come into our ordinary life before we can understand it. They are at your side day and night, and you do not really see them until the moment when they depart for ever. And yet, what a strange little soul she must have had—what a poor little, artless, unfathomable soul she must have had—to have said what she must have said, and done what she must have done!

THE STRANGER

See, they are smiling in the silence of the room.

INTERIOR

THE OLD MAN

They are not at all anxious—they did not expect her this evening

THE STRANGER

They sit motionless and smiling But see, the father puts his fingers to his lips

THE OLD MAN

He points to the child asleep on its mother's breast . .

THE STRANGER

She dares not raise her head for fear of disturbing it .

THE OLD MAN

They are not sewing any more There is a dead silence

THE STRANGER

They have let fall their skein of white silk . .

THE OLD MAN

They are looking at the child

THE STRANGER

They do not know that others are looking at them . . .

THE OLD MAN.

We, too, are watched

THE STRANGER.

They have raised their eyes

THE OLD MAN

And yet they can see nothing

INTERIOR

THE STRANGER

They seem to be happy, and yet there is something—I cannot tell what

THE OLD MAN

They think themselves beyond the reach of danger They have closed the doors, and the windows are barred with iron They have strengthened the walls of the old house, they have shot the bolts of the three oaken doors They have foreseen everything that can be foreseen

THE STRANGER

Sooner or later we must tell them Someone might come and blurt it out abruptly There was a crowd of peasants in the meadow where we left the dead girl—if one of them were to come and knock at the door

THE OLD MAN

Martha and Mary are watching the little body The peasants were going to make a litter of branches, and I told my eldest granddaughter to hurry on and let us know the moment they made a start Let us wait till she comes, she will go with me I wish we had not been able to watch them in this way I thought there was nothing to do but to knock at the door, to enter quite simply, and to tell all in a few phrases But I have watched them too long, living in the lamplight

Enter MARY

MARY

They are coming, grandfather

INTERIOR

THE OLD MAN

Is that you ? Where are they ?

MARY

They are at the foot of the last slope

THE OLD MAN.

They are coming silently

MARY

I told them to pray in a low voice Martha is with them

THE OLD MAN

Are there many of them ?

MARY

The whole village is around the bier They had brought lanterns , I bade them put them out

THE OLD MAN

What way are they coming ?

MARY

They are coming by the little paths They are moving slowly

THE OLD MAN

It is time .

MARY

Have you told them, grandfather ?

THE OLD MAN

You can see that we have told them nothing There they are, still sitting in the lamplight Look, my child, look : you will see what life is

INTERIOR

MARY

Oh ! how peaceful they seem ! I feel as though I were
seeing them in a dream

THE STRANGER

Look there—I saw the two sisters give a start

THE OLD MAN

They are rising

THE STRANGER

I believe they are coming to the windows

*[At this moment one of the two sisters comes up to
the first window, the other to the third, and
resting their hands against the panes they stand
gazing into the darkness]*

THE OLD MAN

No one comes to the middle window

MARY

They are looking out, they are listening

THE OLD MAN

The elder is smiling at what she does not see

THE STRANGER

The eyes of the second are full of fear

THE OLD MAN

Take care who knows how far the soul may extend
around the body

*[A long silence Mary nestles close to the old man's
breast and kisses him]*

INTERIOR

MARY

Grandfather !

THE OLD MAN

Do not weep, my child , our turn will come. *[A pause.*

THE STRANGER

They are looking long

THE OLD MAN

Poor things, they would see nothing though they looked
for a hundred thousand years—the night is too dark
They are looking this way , and it is from the other
side that misfortune is coming

THE STRANGER

It is well that they are looking this way Something, I
do not know what, is approaching by way of the
meadows

MARY

I think it is the crowd , they are too far off for us to see
clearly

THE STRANGER

They are following the windings of the path—there they
come in sight again on that moonlit slope

MARY

Oh ! how many they seem to be Even when I left,
people were coming up from the outskirts of the
town They are taking a very roundabout
way

THE OLD MAN

They will arrive at last, none the less I see them, too—

INTERIOR

they are crossing the meadows—they look so small that one can scarcely distinguish them among the herbage You might think them children playing in the moonlight, if the girls saw them they would not understand Turn their backs to it as they may, misfortune is approaching step by step, and has been looming larger for more than two hours past They cannot bid it stay, and those who are bringing it are powerless to stop it It has mastered them, too, and they must needs serve it It knows its goal, and it takes its course It is unwearying, and it has but one idea They have to lend it their strength They are sad, but they draw nearer Their hearts are full of pity, but they must advance

MARY

The elder has ceased to smile, grandfather.

THE STRANGER

They are leaving the windows

MARY

They are kissing their mother

THE STRANGER

The elder is stroking the child's curls without waking it

MARY

Ah! the father wants them to kiss him, too.

THE STRANGER

Now there is silence

INTERIOR

MARY

They have returned to their mother's side

THE STRANGER

And the father keeps his eyes fixed on the great pendulum
of the clock

MARY

They seem to be praying without knowing what they
do

THE STRANGER

They seem to be listening to their own souls

[A pause]

MARY

Grandfather, do not tell them this evening !

THE OLD MAN

You see, you are losing courage, too I knew you ought
not to look at them I am nearly eighty-three years
old, and this is the first time that the reality of life
has come home to me I do not know why all they
do appears to me so strange and solemn There
they sit awaiting the night, simply, under their lamp,
as we should under our own, and yet I seem to see
them from the altitude of another world, because I
know a little fact which as yet they do not know

Is it so, my children ? Tell me, why are you,
too, pale ? Perhaps there is something else that we
cannot put in words, and that makes us weep ? I
did not know that there was anything so sad in life,
or that it could strike such terror to those who look
on at it And even if nothing had happened, it
would frighten me to see them sit there so peacefully

INTERIOR

They have too much confidence in this world There they sit, separated from the enemy by only a few poor panes of glass They think that nothing will happen because they have closed their doors, and they do not know that it is in the soul that things always happen, and that the world does not end at their house-door They are so secure of their little life, and do not dream that so many others know more of it than they, and that I, poor old man, at two steps from their door, hold all their little happiness, like a wounded bird, in the hollow of my old hands, and dare not open them

MARY

Have pity on them, grandfather .

THE OLD MAN

We have pity on them, my child, but no one has pity on us

MARY

Tell them to-morrow, grandfather, tell them when it is light, then they will not be so sad

THE OLD MAN

Perhaps you are right, my child It would be better to leave all this in the night And the daylight is sweet to sorrow But what would they say to us to-morrow? Misfortune makes people jealous, those upon whom it has fallen want to know of it before strangers—they do not like to leave it in unknown hands We should seem to have robbed them of something

INTERIOR

THE STRANGER

Besides, it is too late now, already I can hear the
murmur of prayers

MARY

They are here—they are passing behind the hedges

Enter MARTHA

MARTHA

Here I am I have guided them hither—I told them to
wait in the road (*Cries of children are heard*)
Ah! the children are still crying I forbade them to
come, but they want to see, too, and the mothers
would not obey me I will go and tell them—no,
they have stopped crying Is everything ready? I
have brought the little ring that was found upon
her I have some fruit, too, for the child I laid
her to rest myself upon the bier She looks as
though she were sleeping I had a great deal of
trouble with her hair—I could not arrange it properly
I made them gather marguerites—it is a pity there
were no other flowers What are you doing here?
Why are you not with them? (*She looks in at the
windows*) They are not weeping! They—you have
not told them!

THE OLD MAN

Martha, Martha, there is too much life in your soul, you
cannot understand

MARTHA

Why should I not understand? (*After a silence, and in*

INTERIOR

a tone of grave reproach) You ought not to have done that, grandfather

THE OLD MAN

Martha, you do not know

MARTHA.

I will go and tell them

THE OLD MAN

Remain here, my child, and look for a moment.

MARTHA

Oh, how I pity them ! They must wait no longer . . .

THE OLD MAN

Why not ?

MARTHA

I do not know, but it is not possible !

THE OLD MAN

Come here, my child

MARTHA

How patient they are !

THE OLD MAN.

Come here, my child .

MARTHA (*turning*)

Where are you, grandfather ? I am so unhappy, I cannot see you any more I do not myself know now what to do .

INTERIOR

THE OLD MAN

Do not look any more , until they know all

MARTHA

I want to go with you

THE OLD MAN

No, Martha, stay here Sit beside your sister on this old stone bench against the wall of the house, and do not look You are too young, you would never be able to forget it You cannot know what a face looks like at the moment when Death is passing into its eyes Perhaps they will cry out, too Do not turn round Perhaps there will be no sound at all Above all things, if there is no sound, be sure you do not turn and look One can never foresee the course that sorrow will take A few little sobs wrung from the depths, and generally that is all I do not know myself what I shall do when I hear them—they do not belong to this life Kiss me, my child, before I go

[The murmur of prayers has gradually drawn nearer A portion of the crowd forces its way into the garden There is a sound of deadened footfalls and of whispering]

THE STRANGER (*to the crowd*)

Stop here—do not go near the window Where is she ?

A PEASANT

Who ?

THE STRANGER

The others—the bearers

INTERIOR

A PEASANT

They are coming by the avenue that leads up to the door
[*The Old Man goes out Martha and Mary have
seated themselves on the bench, their backs to the
windows Low murmurings are heard among
the crowd*]

THE STRANGER

Hush ! Do not speak
[*In the room the taller of the two sisters rises, goes
to the door, and shoots the bolts*]

MARTHA

She is opening the door ?

THE STRANGER

On the contrary, she is fastening it [A pause]

MARTHA

Grandfather has not come in ?

THE STRANGER

No She takes her seat again at her mother's side The
others do not move, and the child is still sleeping
[A pause]

MARTHA

My little sister, give me your hands

MARY

Martha ! [They embrace and kiss each other]

THE STRANGER

He must have knocked—they have all raised their heads
at the same time—they are looking at each other

INTERIOR

MARTHA

Oh! oh! my poor little sister! I can scarcely help crying out, too

[She smothers her sobs on her sister's shoulder]

THE STRANGER

He must have knocked again The father is looking at the clock He rises

MARTHA

Sister, sister, I must go in too—they cannot be left alone

MARY

Martha, Martha!

[She holds her back]

THE STRANGER

The father is at the door—he is drawing the bolts—he is opening it cautiously

MARTHA

Oh!—you do not see the

THE STRANGER.

What?

MARTHA

The bearers .

THE STRANGER

He has only opened it a very little I see nothing but a corner of the lawn and the fountain He keeps his hand on the door—He takes a step back—he seems to be saying, “Ah, it is you!” He raises his arms.

INTERIOR

He carefully closes the door again Your grandfather has entered the room

[The crowd has come up to the window Martha and Mary half rise from their seat, then rise altogether and follow the rest towards the windows, pressing close to each other The Old Man is seen advancing into the room The two Sisters rise, the Mother also rises, and carefully settles the Child in the armchair which she has left, so that from the outside the little one can be seen sleeping, his head a little bent forward, in the middle of the room The Mother advances to meet the Old Man, and holds out her hand to him, but draws it back again before he has had time to take it One of the girls wants to take off the visitor's mantle, and the other pushes forward an armchair for him But the Old Man makes a little gesture of refusal The Father smiles with an air of astonishment The Old Man looks towards the windows]

THE STRANGER

He dares not tell them He is looking towards us

[Murmurs in the crowd]

THE STRANGER

Hush !

[The Old Man, seeing faces at the windows, quickly averts his eyes As one of the girls is still offering him the armchair, he at last sits down and passes his right hand several times over his forehead]

INTERIOR

THE STRANGER

He is sitting down

[The others who are in the room also sit down, while the Father seems to be speaking volubly At last the Old Man opens his mouth, and the sound of his voice seems to arouse their attention But the Father interrupts him The Old Man begins to speak again, and little by little the others grow tense with apprehension All of a sudden the Mother starts and rises

MARTHA

Oh ! the mother begins to understand !

[She turns away and hides her face in her hands Renewed murmurs among the crowd They elbow each other Children cry to be lifted up, so that they may see too Most of the mothers do as they wish

THE STRANGER

Hush ! he has not told them yet

[The Mother is seen to be questioning the Old Man with anxiety He says a few more words, then, suddenly, all the others rise, too, and seem to question him Then he slowly makes an affirmative movement of his head

THE STRANGER.

He has told them—he has told them all at once !

VOICES IN THE CROWD

He has told them ! he has told them !

INTERIOR

THE STRANGER

I can hear nothing

[The Old Man also rises, and, without turning, makes a gesture indicating the door, which is behind him. The Mother, the Father, and the two Daughters rush to this door, which the Father has difficulty in opening. The Old Man tries to prevent the Mother from going out.]

VOICES IN THE CROWD

They are going out ! they are going out !

[Confusion among the crowd in the garden. All hurry to the other side of the house and disappear, except the Stranger, who remains at the windows. In the room, the folding door is at last thrown wide open, all go out at the same time. Beyond can be seen the starry sky, the lawn and the fountain in the moonlight, while, left alone in the middle of the room, the Child continues to sleep peacefully in the armchair. A pause.]

THE STRANGER

The child has not awakened !

[He also goes out.]

THE DEATH OF TINTAGILES

TRANSLATED BY ALFRED SUTRO

CHARACTERS

TINTAGILES.

YGRAINE
BELLANGEPE } *Sisters of Tintagiles.*

AGLOVALE.

THREE SERVANTS *of the Queen.*

ACT I

SCENE

On the top of a hill overlooking the castle

Enter YGRAINE, holding TINTAGILES by the hand

YGRAINE

Your first night will be sad, Tintagiles The roar of the sea is already about us, and the trees are moaning It is late The moon is sinking behind the poplars that stifle the palace We are alone, perhaps, but here, one has ever to be on one's guard They seem to watch lest the smallest happiness come near I said to myself one day, right down in the depths of my soul—and God himself could scarcely hear,—I said to myself one day that I was feeling almost happy There needed nothing more, and very soon after our old father died, and our two brothers disappeared, and not a living creature can tell us where they are I am here all alone, with my poor sister and you, my little Tintagiles, and I have no confidence in the future Come to me, let me take you on my knees First kiss me, and put your little arms—there—right round my neck perhaps they will not be able to unfasten them Do you remember the time when it was I who carried you in the evening, when the hour had come, and how frightened you

THE DEATH OF

ACT I

were at the shadows of my lamp in the corridors,
those long corridors with not a single window? I
felt my soul tremble or my lips when I saw you
again, suddenly, this morning I thought you
were so far away and in safety Who made you
come here?

TINTAGILES

I do not know, little sister

YGRAINE.

Do you remember what they said?

TINTAGILES

They said I must go away

YGRAINE.

But why had you to go away?

TINTAGILES

Because the Queen wished it

YGRAINE

Did they not say why she wished it?—I am sure they
must have said many things

TINTAGILES

Little sister, I did not hear

YGRAINE

When they spoke among themselves, what was it they said?

ACT I

TINTAGILES

TINTAGILES

Little sister, they dropped their voices when they spoke

YGRAINE

All the time ?

TINTAGILES

All the time, sister Ygraine, except when they looked
at me

YGRAINE

Did they say nothing about the Queen ?

TINTAGILES

They said, sister Ygraine, that no one ever saw her

YGRAINE

And the people who were with you on the ship, did they
say nothing ?

TINTAGILES

They gave all their time to the wind and the sails, sister
Ygraine

YGRAINE

Ah ! That does not surprise me, my child .

TINTAGILES

They left me all alone, little sister

YGRAINE

Listen to me, Tintagiles ; I will tell you what I know. . .

TINTAGILES

What do you know, sister Ygraine ?

THE DEATH OF

ACT I

YGRAINE

Very little, my child My sister and I have gone on living here ever since we were born, not daring to understand the things that happened I have lived a long time in this island, and I might as well have been blind, yet it all seemed natural to me. A bird that flew, a leaf that trembled, a rose that opened these were events to me. Such silence has always reigned here that a ripe fruit falling in the park would draw faces to the window. And no one seemed to have any suspicion but one night I learned that there must be something besides. I wished to escape and I could not. Have you understood what I am telling you?

TINTAGILES

Yes, yes, little sister, I can understand anything.

YGRAINE

Then let us not talk any more of these things one does not know. Do you see, behind the dead trees which poison the horizon, do you see the castle, there, right down in the valley?

TINTAGILES

I see something very black—is that the castle, sister Ygraine?

YGRAINE

Yes, it is very black. It lies far down amid a mass of gloomy shadows. It is there that we have to live. They might have built it on the top of the great mountains that surround it. The mountains are

blue in the day-time One could have breathed
 One could have looked down on the sea and on the
 plains beyond the cliffs But they preferred to
 build it deep down in the valley, too low even for
 the air to come It is falling in ruins, and no one
 troubles The walls are crumbling it might be
 fading away in the gloom There is only one
 tower which time does not touch It is enormous
 and its shadow is always on the house

TINTAGILES

They are lighting something, sister Ygraine See, see,
 the great red windows !

YGRAINE

They are the windows of the tower, Tintagiles, they are
 the only ones in which you will ever see light, it is
 there that the Queen has her throne.

TINTAGILES

Shall I not see the Queen ?

YGRAINE

No one can see her

TINTAGILES

Why can no one see her ?

YGRAINE

Come closer, Tintagiles Not even a bird or a blade
 of grass must hear us

TINTAGILES

There is no grass, little sister (*a moment's silence*).
 What does the Queen do ?

THE DEATH OF

ACT I

YGRAINE

That no one knows, my child She is never seen
She lives there, all alone in the tower, and those
who wait on her do not go out by daylight
She is very old, she is the mother of our mother,
and she wishes to reign alone She is suspicious
and jealous, and they say she is mad She is
afraid lest some one should raise himself to her place,
and it is probably because of this fear of hers that
you have been brought hither Her orders are
carried out but no one knows how She never
leaves the tower, and all the gates are closed night
and day I have never seen her, but it seems
others have, long ago, when she was young .

TINTAGILES

Is she very ugly, sister Ygraine ?

YGRAINE

They say she is not beautiful, and that her form is strange
But those who have seen her dare not speak
of her And who knows whether they have
seen her ? She has a power which we do not
understand, and we live here with a terrible weight
on our soul You must not be unduly frightened,
or have bad dreams, we will watch over you, little
Tintagiles, and no harm can come to you, but do not
stray far from me, or your sister Bellangère, or our
old master Aglovale

TINTAGILES

Aglovale, too, sister Ygraine ?

ACT I

TINTAGILES

YGRAINE

Aglovale too . he loves us .

TINTAGILES.

He is so old, little sister !

YGRAINE

He is old, but very wise He is the only friend we
have left, and he knows many things It is
strange, she made you come here, and no one was
told of it I do not know what is in my heart

I was sorrowful and glad to know that you
were far away, beyond the sea And now
I was taken by surprise I went out this morn-
ing to see whether the sun was rising over the
mountains, and I saw you on the threshold . I
knew you at once

TINTAGILES

No, no, little sister, it was I who laughed first . .

YGRAINE

I could not laugh just then You will under-
stand. It is time, Tintagiles, and the wind is
becoming black on the sea Kiss me, before
getting up, kiss me, harder, again, again You
do not know how one loves Give me your little
hand I will keep it in mine, and we will go
back to the old sick castle [They go out

THE DEATH OF

ACT II

ACT II

SCENE

A room in the castle, in which Agloval and Ygraine are seated

Enter BELLANGÈRE

BELLANGÈRE

Where is Tintagles ?

YGRAINE

He is here , do not speak too loud He is asleep in the other room He was a little pale, he did not seem well The journey had tired him—he was a long time on the sea Or perhaps it is the atmosphere of the castle which has alarmed his little soul He was crying, and did not know why he cried I nursed him on my knees , come, look at him He is asleep in our bed He sleeps very gravely, with one hand on his brow, like a little sorrowful king

BELLANGÈRE (*suddenly bursting into tears*)

Sister ! Sister ! my poor sister !

YGRAINE

Why are you crying ?

BELLANGÈRE

I dare not tell what I know and I am not sure that I know anything but yet I have heard—that which one could not hear

YGRAINE

What have you heard ?

BELLANGÈRE

I was passing close to the corridors of the tower . . .

YGRAINE.

Ah ! . . .

BELLANGÈRE

One of the doors was ajar I pushed it very gently . .
I went in

YGRAINE

Where ?

BELLANGÈRE

I had never seen There were other corridors lighted
with lamps , and then low galleries, which seemed
to have no end I knew it was forbidden to go
farther I was afraid and was about to turn back,
but there was a sound of voices though one
could scarcely hear

YGRAINE

It must have been the servants of the Queen , they live at
the foot of the tower

BELLANGÈRE

I do not know quite what it was There must have
been more than one door between , and the voices
came to me like the voice of some one who is being
strangled I went as near as I could I am
not sure of anything but I believe they were speak-
ing of a child who had arrived to-day, and of a crown
of gold . They seemed to be laughing . . .

THE DEATH OF

ACT II

YGRAINE

They were laughing ?

BELLANGÈRE

Yes, I think they were laughing unless it was that they were crying, or that it was something I did not understand, for one heard badly, and their voices were low There seemed to be a great many of them moving about in the vault They were speaking of the child that the Queen wished to see They will probably come here this evening

YGRAINE

What ? this evening ?

BELLANGÈRE

Yes yes I think so yes . .

YGRAINE

Did they not mention any name ?

BELLANGÈRE

They spoke of a child—a little, little child .

YGRAINE

There is no other child here . .

BELLANGÈRE

Just then they raised their voices a little, for one of them had doubted whether the day was come

YGRAINE

I know what that means, and it will not be the first time that they have left the tower I knew only

too well why she made him come but I could
not think she would show such haste as this !
We shall see there are three of us, and we
have time

BELLANGÈRE

What do you mean to do ?

YGRAINE

I do not know yet what I shall do, but I shall surprise
her do you know what that means, you who
only can tremble ? I will tell you

BELLANGÈRE

What ?

YGRAINE

She shall not take him without a struggle . . .

BELLANGÈRE

We are alone, sister Ygraine

YGRAINE

Ah ! it is true we are alone ! There is only one
thing to be done, and it never fails us ! Let us
wait on our knees as we did before Perhaps
she will have pity ! She allows herself to be
moved by tears We must grant her everything
she asks, she will smile perhaps, and it is her habit
to spare all who kneel All these years she
has been there in her enormous tower, devouring
those we love, and not a single one has dared strike
her in the face She lies on our soul like the
stone of a tomb, and no one dares stretch out his

THE DEATH OF

ACT II

arm . In the times when there were men here,
they too were afraid, and fell upon their faces
To-day it is the woman's turn we shall see
It is time that some one should dare to rise
No one knows on what her power rests, and I will
no longer live in the shadow of her tower Go
away, if you two can only tremble like this-- go away
both of you, and leave me still more alone I
will wait for her

BELLANGÈRE

Sister, I do not know what has to be done, but I will
wait with you

AGLOVALE

I too will wait, my daughter My soul has long been
ill at ease You will try we have tried
more than once

YGRAINE

You have tried you also ?

AGLOVALE

They have all tried But at the last moment their
strength has failed them You too, you shall
see If she were to command me to go up to
her this very evening, I would put my two hands
together and say nothing, and my weary feet would
climb the staircase, without lingering and without
hastening, though I know full well that none come
down again with eyes unclosed There is no
courage left in me against her our hands are
helpless, and can touch no one Other hands

THE DEATH OF

ACT III

that one remembers I have done all this before,
I do not know when but I have never dared
draw my sword Now, it lies there before me,
though my arms no longer have strength, but I
intend to try It is perhaps time that men
should defend themselves, even though they do not
understand

*[Bellangère carrying Tintagiles in her arms, comes
out of the adjoining room]*

BELLANGÈRE

He was awake

YGRAINE

He is pale what ails him ?

BELLANGÈRE

I do not know he was very silent He was
crying

YGRAINE

Tintagiles

BELLANGÈRE

He is looking away from you

YGRAINE

He does not seem to know me Tintagiles, where
are you ?—It is your sister who speaks to you .
What are you looking at so fixedly ?—Turn round
come, I will play with you .

TINTAGILES

No no

YGRAINE

You do not want to play ?

ACT III

TINTAGILES

TINTAGILES

I cannot stand, sister YGRAINE

YGRAINE

You cannot stand ? Come, come, what is the matter
with you ?—Are you suffering any pain ?

TINTAGILES

Yes .

YGRAINE

Tell me where it is, Tintagles, and I will cure you. . .

TINTAGILES

I cannot tell, sister Ygraine everywhere

YGRAINE

Come to me, Tintagles You know that my arms
are softer, and I will put them around you, and you
will feel better at once Give him to me,
Bellangère He shall sit on my knee, and the
pain will go There, you see ? Your big
sisters are here They are close to you we
will defend you, and no evil can come near

TINTAGILES

It has come, sister Ygraine Why is there no light,
sister Ygraine ?

YGRAINE

There is a light, my child Do you not see the lamp
that hangs from the rafters ?

TINTAGILES

Yes, yes It is not large Are there no others ?

THE DEATH OF

ACT III.

YGRAINE

Why should there be others ? We can see what we have
to see

TINTAGILES

Ah ! .

YGRAINE

Oh ! your eyes are deep

TINTAGILES

So are yours, sister Ygraine .

YGRAINE

I did not notice it this morning . I have just seen in
your eyes We do not quite know what the
soul thinks it sees

TINTAGILES

I have not seen the soul, sister Ygraine But why is
Aglovale on the threshold ?

YGRAINE

He is resting a little He wanted to kiss you before
going to bed he was waiting for you to
wake

TINTAGILES.

What has he on his knees ?

YGRAINE

On his knees ? I see nothing on his knees . .

TINTAGILES.

Yes, yes, there is something . .

ACT III.

TINTAGILES

AGLOVALE

It is nothing, my child I was looking at my old sword, and I scarcely recognise it It has served me many years, but for a long time past I have lost confidence in it, and I think it is going to break . Here, just by the hilt, there is a little stain I had noticed that the steel was growing paler, and I asked myself I do not remember what I asked myself My soul is very heavy to-day What is one to do ? Men must needs live and await the unforeseen And after that they must still act as if they hoped / There are sad evenings when our useless lives taste bitter in our mouths, and we would like to close our eyes It is late, and I am tired

TINTAGILES

He has wounds, sister Ygraine

YGRAINE

Where ?

TINTAGILES

On his forehead and on his hands

AGLOVALE

Those are very old wounds, from which I suffer no longer, my child The light must be falling on them this evening You had not noticed them before ?

TINTAGILES

He looks sad, sister Ygraine

YGRAINE

No, no, he is not sad, but very weary . .

THE DEATH OF

ACT III.

TINTAGILES

You too are sad, sister Ygraine

YGRAINE

Why no, why no, look at me, I am smiling . .

TINTAGILES

And my other sister too. .

YGRAINE.

Oh no, she too is smiling

TINTAGILES

No, that is not a smile I know . .

YGRAINE

Come, kiss me, and think of something else

[She kisses him]

TINTAGILES

Of what shall I think, sister Ygraine?—Why do you hurt me when you kiss me?

YGRAINE

Did I hurt you?

TINTAGILES

Yes I do not know why I hear your heart beat,
sister Ygraine

YGRAINE

Do your hear it beat?

TINTAGILES

Oh! Oh! it beats as though it wanted to .

YGRAINE

What ?

TINTAGILES

I do not know, sister Ygraine

YGRAINE

It is wrong to be frightened without reason, and to speak
in riddles Oh ! your eyes are full of tears
Why are you unhappy ? I hear your heart beating,
now people always hear them when they hold
one another so close It is then that the heart
speaks and says things that the tongue does not
know

TINTAGILES

I heard nothing before

YGRAINE

That was because Oh ! but your heart ! . .
What is the matter ? It is bursting ! . . .

TINTAGILES (*crying*).

Sister Ygraine ! sister Ygraine !

YGRAINE.

What is it ?

TINTAGILES

I have heard They they are coming !

YGRAINE

Who ? Who are coming ? What has hap-
pened ? .

THE DEATH OF

ACT III.

TINTAGILES

The door ! the door ! They were there ! . .

[He falls backwards on to Ygraine's knees.]

YGRAINE

What is it ? . . He has . . he has fainted . .

BELLANGÈRE

Take care . . take care . . He will fall . .

AGLOVALE *(rising brusquely, his sword in his hand).*

I too can hear . . there are steps in the corridor

YGRAINE

Oh ! *[A moment's silence—they all listen]*

AGLOVALE

Yes, I hear . . There is a crowd of them . .

YGRAINE

A crowd . . a crowd . . how ?

AGLOVALE

I do not know . . one hears and one does not hear
They do not move like other creatures, but
they come . . They are touching the door

YGRAINE *(clasping Tintagles in her arms)*

Tintagles ! . . Tintagles ! . .

BELLANGÈRE *(embracing him)*

Let me, too ! let me ! . . Tintagles !

ACT III

TINTAGILES

AGLOVALE

They are shaking the door listen . . do not
breathe They are whispering

[A key is heard turning harshly in the lock]

YGRAINE

They have the key !

AGLOVALE

Yes . yes I was sure of it Wait (He
plants himself, with sword outstretched, on the last
step To the two sisters) Come ! come both !

[For a moment there is silence The door opens slowly Aglovale thrusts his sword wildly through the opening, driving the point between the beams The sword breaks with a loud report under the silent pressure of the timber, and the pieces of steel roll down the steps with a resounding clang Ygraine leaps up, carrying in her arms Tintagiles, who has fainted, and she, Bellangère and Aglovale, putting forth all their strength, try, but in vain, to close the door, which slowly opens wider and wider, although no one can be seen or heard Only, a cold and calm light penetrates into the room At this moment Tintagiles, suddenly stretching out his limbs, regains consciousness, sends forth a long cry of deliverance, and embraces his sister—and at this very instant the door, which resists no longer, falls to brusquely under their pressure, which they have not had time to stop]

YGRAINE

Tintagiles ! *[They look with amazement at each other]*

THE DEATH OF

ACT III.

AGLOVALE (*waiting at the door*).

I hear nothing now

YGRAINE (*wild with joy*)

Tintagiles ! Tintagiles ! Look ! Look ! He is saved !

Look at his eyes you can see the blue

He is going to speak They saw we
were watching They did not dare

Kiss us ! Kiss us, I say ! Kiss us !

All ! all ! Down to the depths of our soul ! .

[*All four, their eyes full of tears, fall into each
other's arms*]

ACT IV

SCENE

A corridor in front of the room in which the last Act took
place

*Three SERVANTS of the Queen enter They are all veiled,
and their long black robes flow down to the ground*

FIRST SERVANT (*listening at the door*)

They are not watching

SECOND SERVANT.

We need not have waited .

THIRD SERVANT

She prefers that it should be done in silence . .

ACT IV.

TINTAGILES

FIRST SERVANT

I knew that they must fall asleep

SECOND SERVANT

Quick ! open the door

THIRD SERVANT

It is time

FIRST SERVANT

Wait there I will enter alone There is no need for
three of us .

SECOND SERVANT.

You are right he is very small .

THIRD SERVANT

You must be careful with the elder sister .

SECOND SERVANT

Remember the Queen does not want them to know. . .

FIRST SERVANT

Have no fear , people seldom hear my coming . .

SECOND SERVANT

Go in then , it is time

*[The First Servant opens the door cautiously and
goes into the room*

It is close on midnight

THIRD SERVANT.

Ah ! .

*[A moment's silence. The First Servant comes out
of the room*

THE DEATH OF

ACT IV

SECOND SERVANT

Where is he ?

FIRST SERVANT

He is asleep between his sisters His arms are around
their necks, and their arms enfold him
cannot do it alone

SECOND SERVANT

I will help you

THIRD SERVANT

Yes, do you go together I will keep watch
here

FIRST SERVANT.

Be careful, they seem to know They were all
three struggling with a bad dream
[The two Servants go into the room]

THIRD SERVANT

People always know, but they do not understand
*[A moment's silence The First and Second Servants
come out of the room again]*

THIRD SERVANT

Well ?

SECOND SERVANT

You must come too we cannot separate them .

FIRST SERVANT

No sooner do we unclasp their arms than they fall back
around the child

SECOND SERVANT

And the child nestles closer and closer to them . .

ACT IV

TINTAGILES

FIRST SERVANT

He is lying with his forehead on the elder sister's
heart

SECOND SERVANT

And his head rises and falls on her bosom . .

FIRST SERVANT

We shall not be able to open his hands . .

SECOND SERVANT

They are plunged deep down into his sisters' hair . .

FIRST SERVANT

He holds one golden curl between his little teeth . .

SECOND SERVANT

We shall have to cut the elder sister's hair.

FIRST SERVANT

And the other sister's too, you will see . .

SECOND SERVANT

Have you your scissors ?

THIRD SERVANT

Yes

FIRST SERVANT

Come quickly , they have begun to move .

SECOND SERVANT

Their hearts and their eyelids are throbbing together

FIRST SERVANT

Yes , I caught a glimpse of the elder girl's blue eyes

THE DEATH OF

ACT IV.

SECOND SERVANT

She looked at us but did not see us

FIRST SERVANT

If one touches one of them, the other two tremble . .

SECOND SERVANT

They are trying hard, but they cannot stir .

FIRST SERVANT

The elder sister wishes to scream, but she cannot

SECOND SERVANT

Come quickly , they seem to know

THIRD SERVANT

Where is the old man ?

FIRST SERVANT

He is asleep—away from the others

SECOND SERVANT

He sleeps, his forehead resting on the hilt of his sword . .

FIRST SERVANT

He knows of nothing , and he has no dreams. .

THIRD SERVANT

Come, come, we must hasten

FIRST SERVANT

You will find it difficult to separate their limbs .

ACT IV.

TINTAGILES

SECOND SERVANT

They are clutching at each other as though they were drowning

THIRD SERVANT

Come, come

[They go in The silence is broken only by sighs and low murmurs of suffering, held in thrall by sleep Then the three Servants emerge very hurriedly from the gloomy room One of them carries Tintagiles, who is fast asleep, in her arms From his little hands, twitching in sleep, and his mouth, drawn in agony, a glittering stream of golden tresses, ravished from the heads of his sisters, flows down to the ground The Servants hurry on There is perfect silence, but no sooner have they reached the end of the corridor than Tintagiles awakes, and sends forth a cry of supreme distress]

TINTAGILES (*from the end of the corridor*)

Aah!

[There is again silence Then from the adjoining room the two sisters are heard moving about restlessly]

YGRAINE (*in the room*).

Tintagiles! . . . where is he?

BELLANGÈRE

He is not here

YGRAINE (*with growing anguish*)

Tintagiles! . . . a lamp, a lamp! Light it! . . .

THE DEATH OF

ACT V

BELLANGÈRE

Yes Yes

[Ygraine is seen coming out of the room with the lighted lamp in her hand]

YGRAINE

The door is wide open !

The voice of TINTAGILES (almost inaudible in the distance)

Sister Ygraine !

YGRAINE

He calls ! He calls ! Tintagiles ! Tintagiles !

[She rushes into the corridor Bellangere tries to follow, but falls fainting on the threshold]

ACT V

SCENE

Before a great iron door in a gloomy vault

Enter YGRAINE, haggard and dishevelled, with a lamp in her hand

YGRAINE (*turning wildly to and fro*)

They have not followed me ! Bellangère !
Bellangère ! Aglovale ! Where are they ?
—They said they loved him and they leave me alone !
Tintagiles ! Tintagiles ! Oh ! I
remember I have climbed steps without number,

between great pitiless walls, and my heart bids me
 live no longer These vaults seem to move
 (*She supports herself against the pillars*) I am
 falling Oh! Oh! my poor life! I can feel it
 It is trembling on my lips—it wants to depart
 I know not what I have done I have
 seen nothing, I have heard nothing Oh, this
 silence! All along the steps and all along the
 walls I found these golden curls, and I followed
 them I picked them up Oh! oh! they are
 very pretty! Little childie little childie
 what was I saying? I remember I do
 not believe in it When one sleeps All that
 has no importance and is not possible Of what
 am I thinking? I do not know One
 awakes, and then After all—come, after all—
 I must think this out Some say one thing, some
 say the other, but the way of the soul is quite
 different When the chain is removed, there is
 much more than one knows I came here with
 my little lamp It did not go out, in spite of the
 wind on the staircase And then, what is one to
 think? There are so many things which are vague
 There must be people who know them, but
 why do they not speak? (*She looks around her*)
 I have never seen all this before It is difficult
 to get so far—and it is all forbidden How cold
 it is . . . And so dark that one is afraid to breathe
 . They say there is poison in these gloomy
 shadows That door looks very terrible
 (*She goes up to the door and touches it*) Oh! how
 cold it is It is of iron solid iron—and

THE DEATH OF

ACT V

there is no lock How can they open it ? I see
no hinges I suppose it is sunk into the wall
 This is as far as one can go There are no
more steps (*Suddenly sending forth a terrible shriek*)
Ah ! more golden hair between the panels !
Tintagiles ! Tintagiles ! I heard the door close
just now I remember ! I remember ! It
must be ! (*She beats frantically against the door*
with hands and feet) Oh, monster ! monster ! It is
here that I find you ! Listen ! I blaspheme ! I
blaspheme and spit on you !

[*Feeble knocks are heard from the other side of the
door then the voice of Tintagiles penetrates very
feebly through the iron panels*]

TINTAGILES

Sister Ygraine, sister Ygraine !

YGRAINE

Tintagiles ! What ! what ! Tintagiles, is
it you ?

TINTAGILES

Quick, open, open ! She is here !

YGRAINE

Oh ! oh ! Who ? Tintagiles, my little Tintagiles
 can you hear me ! What is it ? .
What has happened ? Tintagiles ! . Have
they hurt you ? Where are you ? Are you
there ?

TINTAGILES

Sister Ygraine, sister Ygraine ! Open for me—or I
shall die

ACT V

TINTAGILES

YGRAINE

I will try—wait, wait I will open it, I will open
it

TINTAGILES

But you do not understand ! Sister Ygraine !
There is no time to lose ! She tried to hold me
back ! I struck her, struck her . . I ran
Quick, quick, she is coming !

YGRAINE

Yes, yes where is she ?

TINTAGILES

I can see nothing but I hear oh, I am afraid,
sister Ygraine, I am afraid Quick, quick !
Quick, open ! for the dear Lord's sake,
sister Ygraine !

YGRAINE (*anxiously groping along the door*)

I am sure to find it Wait a little a minute
a second

TINTAGILES

I cannot, sister Ygraine I can feel her breath on me
now

YGRAINE

It is nothing, Tintagles, my little Tintagiles , do not be
frightened if I could only see

TINTAGILES.

Oh, but you can see—I can see your lamp from here . .
It is quite light where you are, sister Ygraine . .
Here I can see nothing

THE DEATH OF

ACT V.

YGRAINE

You see me, Tintagiles ? How can you see ? There is
not a crack in the door

TINTAGILES

Yes, yes, there is , but it is so small ! . . .

YGRAINE.

On which side ? Is it here ? tell me, tell me
or is it over there ?

TINTAGILES

It is here Listen, listen ! I am knocking

YGRAINE

Here ?

TINTAGILES

Higher up . But it is so small ! . A needle could
not go through !

YGRAINE

Do not be afraid, I am here

TINTAGILES

Oh, I know, sister Ygraine ! Pull ! pull ! You must
pull ! She is coming ! if you could only open a
little . a very little I am so small !

YGRAINE

My nails are broken, Tintagiles I have pulled, I have
pushed, I have struck with all my might—with all my

ACT V

TINTAGILES

might ! (*She strikes again, and tries to shake the massive door*) Two of my fingers are numbed
Do not cry It is of iron

TINTAGILES (*sobbing in despair*)

You have nothing to open with, sister Ygraine ?
nothing at all, nothing at all ? I could get
through I am so small, so very small you
know how small I am

YGRAINE

I have only my lamp, Tintagiles There ! there !
(*She aims repeated blows at the gate with her earthen-ware lamp, which goes out and breaks, the pieces falling to the ground*) Oh ! It has all grown
dark ! Tintagiles, where are you ? Oh !
listen, listen ! Can you not open from the
inside ?

TINTAGILES

No, no, there is nothing I cannot feel anything at
all I cannot see the light through the crack
any more

YGRAINE

What is the matter, Tintagiles ? . I can scarcely hear
you

TINTAGILES

Little sister, sister Ygraine It is too late now .

YGRAINE

What is it, Tintagiles ? Where are you going ?

THE DEATH OF

ACT V.

TINTAGILES

She is here! Oh, I am so weak Sister Ygraine,
sister Ygraine I feel her on me! .

YGRAINE

Whom? whom?

TINTAGILES

I do not know I cannot see But it is too late
now She she is taking me by the throat
Her hand is at my throat Oh, oh, sister
Ygraine, come to me!

YGRAINE.

Yes, yes

TINTAGILES

It is so dark

YGRAINE

Struggle—fight—tear her to pieces! Do not be
afraid Wait a moment! I am here
Tintagles? Tintagles! answer me!
Help!!! where are you? I will come to
you kiss me through the door . . here
—here

TINTAGILES (*very feebly*).

Here . . . here sister Ygraine . . .

YGRAINE

I am putting my kisses on this spot here, do you under-
stand? Again, again!

TINTAGILES (*more and more feebly*)

Mine too—here sister Ygraine! Sister Ygraine!
Oh!

[*The fall of a little body is heard behind the iron door*]

YGRAINE

Tintagiles! Tintagiles! What have you done?
Give him back, give him back! for the
love of God, give him back to me! I can hear
nothing What are you doing with him?
You will not hurt him? He is only a little
child He cannot resist Look, look!
I mean no harm I am on my knees Give
him back to us, I beg of you Not for my sake
only, you know it well I will do anything
I bear no ill-will, you see I implore you with
clasped hands I was wrong I am quite
resigned, you see I have lost all I had
You should punish me some other way There are
so many things which would hurt me more if
you want to hurt me You shall see But this
poor child has done no harm. What I said was
not true but I did not know I know that
you are very good Surely the time for forgive-
ness has come! He is so young and beautiful,
and he is so small! You must see that it cannot
be! He puts his little arms around your neck
his little mouth on your mouth, and God Himself
could not say him nay You will open the door,
will you not? I am asking so little I
want him for an instant, just for an instant I

DEATH OF TINTAGILES ACT V

cannot remember You will understand I
did not have time He can get through the
tiniest opening It is not difficult (*A long*
inexorable silence) Monster ! Monster !

Curse you ! Curse you ! I spit on you !
[*She sinks down and continues to sob softly, her*
arms outspread against the gate, in the gloom

WORKS BY MAURICE MAETERLINCK

Translated by ALFRED SUTRO and
A. TELXEIRA DE MATTOS

ESSAYS

The Life of the Bee
The Treasure of the Humble
Wisdom and Destiny
The Buried Temple
The Double Garden
Life and Flowers

*Crown 8vo 6s net each POCKET EDITION Cloth, 3s 6d net,
Leather, 6s net each*

PLAYS

Monna Vanna
Aglavaine and Selysette
Joyzelle
Sister Beatrice, and Ardiane and Barbe Bleue
Translated by BERNARD MIALL
Pelleas and Melisanda, and the Sightless
Translated by LAURENCE ALMA TADEMA
The Death of Fintagiles, and Other Plays

*Globe 8vo, 5s net each POCKET EDITION Cloth 3s 6d net,
Leather, 6s net each*

Old-Fashioned Flowers

Illustrated in Colour by G S ELGOOD Imp 16mo,
5s net

My Dog

Illustrated in Colour by CECIL ALDIN Felt 4to, 6s net

Children's Life of the Bee

Illustrated in Colour by E J DETMOLD Selected and
Arranged by ALFRED SUTRO and HERSCHEL WILLIAMS
La Cr 8vo, 7s 6d net

GEORGE ALLEN & UNWIN LIMITED

GILBERT MURRAY'S

Translations into English Rhyming Verse,
with Commentaries and Explanatory Notes

Cr 8vo

Cloth, 3s net each, Paper, 2s net each

EURIPIDES

ALCESTIS

BACCHÆ

ELECTRA

HIPPOLYTUS

IPHIGENIA IN

TAURIS

MEDEA

RHESUS

TROJAN WOMEN

ARISTOPHANES

FROGS

AESCHYLUS

THE AGAMEMNON

THE CHOËPHOROE

(Libation-Bearers)

SOPHOCLES

ŒDIPUS, KING OF

THEBES

PLAYS BY ST JOHN ERVINE

Cr 8vo

3s 6d net each

MARY, MARY, QUITE CONTRARY

THE SHIP

JOHN FERGUSON

MIXED MARRIAGE

THE LADY OF BELMONT

A sequel, in prose, to The Merchant of Venice

LONDON GEORGE ALLEN & UNWIN LIMITED
RUSKIN HOUSE, 40 MUSEUM STREET, WC 1

